

ARNOLD

MATTHEW ARNOLD

SELECTED & EDITED BY
HENRY NEWBOLT



THOMAS NELSON
& SONS LTD

LONDON & EDINBURGH

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN AT
THE PRESS OF THE PUBLISHERS

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INTRODUCTION

MATTHEW ARNOLD (1822–1888) was the son of Thomas Arnold, the famous headmaster of Rugby. He was educated at Rugby and Balliol, where he won the Newdigate; became a fellow of Oriel, Newman's college; and in 1850 took up the post of Inspector of Schools, and made education the task of his working life. As a man he was noted among his friends for his cheerfulness and sense of fun, and to the end found his pleasure in long country walks, chiefly in the Lake district, and in trout fishing. The subdued lights of his poetry and the finical element in his criticism are no index to a character which was pre-eminently stalwart and human, and a career devoted to laborious public duties.

With his critical and theological writings we are not here concerned. After his prize poems, his first essay in poetry was the slim volume called *The Strayed Reveller, and Other Poems, by A* (1849), which contained his best sonnet, "To Shakspeare," and "The Forsaken Merman." *Empedocles on Etna, and Other Poems, by A*, followed in 1852, containing, besides the title-piece, "Tristram and Iseult," and "Lines written in Kensington Gardens." The book was soon withdrawn, because, as he explained in his preface to his next volume, the subject of "Empedocles" was wrong,

since "the suffering finds no vent in action." That next volume, *Poems* (1853), was issued with the author's name, and included, in addition to selections from the earlier books, "Sohrab and Rustum," "The Church of Brou," and "The Scholar-Gipsy." Another volume of *Poems* appeared in 1855, with among them "Balder Dead" and "Resignation," and in 1858, *Merope*, Arnold's not very successful attempt at a Greek tragedy on the classic lines. *New Poems* was issued in 1867, in which "Empedocles" was restored to the canon, and such masterpieces were given to the world as "Rugby Chapel," "Thyrsis," and the "Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse." There were one or two later poems like "Westminster Abbey," but by 1867 his chief poetic work had been completed.

Arnold was not in the main line of descent from the great romantics of the early nineteenth century, and such romanticism as he possessed was a sad and disillusioned heritage. The main influences with him were the writers of Greece and Rome, and, among the moderns, Goethe and Wordsworth. His was always, however, an eclectic classicism. What he loved in the Greeks was their grave perfection of form, their serenity and composure of soul, and their sense of the dominion of law. He believed that Zeus governed, and that order was greater than liberty; when he rebelled it was against a fashionable anarchy. With many sides of the classical culture he had no sympathy; Pallas and Hero, as Professor Elton well says, were his divinities rather than Aphrodite and Pan. Homer and Sophocles were the writers who most influenced him, and pastoralists like Theocritus, and in philosophy he was nearer to Lucretius than to Plato. From Goethe he learned the applica-

tion of the classical order to a turbid modern world. But Wordsworth was, perhaps, the chief moulding force. Among his rare passions was a love of nature, a love neither mystical nor sensuous, but based on an intense enjoying power combined with the Wordsworthian marriage of the natural and the human. His was no apocalyptic vision, but a sober and comforting interpretation. Finally, he had inherited a strong moral instinct, which led him frequently both in verse and prose into the pulpit. Art for righteousness' sake was his creed, and it crystallized itself into phrases which have become ethical counters, and which came with him to have the spell of incantations. He was no idle singer of an idle day, but a man with a mission to guide and constrain his fellows into the paths of wisdom.

The poetry of such an one was bound to have an inner austerity, both in form and substance. It must ensue simplicity and intellectual integrity. "The grand style," as he wrote, "arises in poetry when a noble nature, poetically gifted, treats with simplicity or with severity a serious subject." Obviously everything depends on the words "poetically gifted"; with such a creed the work can never be trivial or perverse, but, if a divine afflatus is wanting, it may be prosaic. Arnold's poetry is, therefore, a continuous conflict between the forms of prose and verse, in which the intellectual inspiration rarely fails but the poetic inspiration sometimes halts. In his quest for the "piety of speech" he is occasionally so bare that the verse form seems *accidental*. In his own words he "cannot kindle when he will the fire that in the heart resides"; he is always weighty and exalted, but he is not always a singer.

He himself classified his poems as narrative, dramatic,

elegiac, lyrical, and sonnets. In the first class he has achieved no complete success, for he had none of the speed and the closeness of texture of his master Homer. His narrative parts are apt to be flat and lifeless, and it is in the Virgilian moralizings that he succeeds, and in exquisite descriptions such as the closing lines of "Sohrab and Rustum." "The Sick King in Bokhara," which is rather a reflection than a story, is perhaps the most satisfying. His dramas are not dramatic. "Merope" is as nearly unreadable as anything written by Arnold could be, and "Empedocles" lives by virtue of its meditations, its pictures of nature, and its songs. It is in his elegiac pieces and in his few lyrics that his supreme accomplishment is to be found. There all his qualities are combined: his delicate ear for rhythms, his gift of golden and unforgettable phrases, his lofty imagery, his classic perfection of form, and, behind all, the classical sense of the tears of things, and the disenchanted classical fortitude. The moralist is never absent, but he wears his singing robes. "The Scholar-Gipsy" and "Thyrsis," akin in setting and spirit, must rank among the greatest elegiac poems in the language. In the unrhymed pieces, like "Heine's Grave" and "Rugby Chapel," though the poet's ear sometimes fails him, there is an essential nobility and dignity, and the cumulative force of the rhythm, as the poems draw to their conclusion, has the grandeur of Gregorian music. There is everywhere a curious felicity of phrase. Elegiac also in a sense are the purely reflective poems like "Obermann Once More" and "Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse," where, however, the philosopher sometimes overpowers the poet, except in the wonderful pictures of Alpine scenery. Arnold wrote few lyrics in

the technical sense, though the lyrical cry often breaks out in his work; thought is always apt to stifle the voice of the singer. But "Requiescat" is perfect, and little behind come "The Forsaken Merman" and the songs of Callicles.

It is difficult to determine Arnold's place among nineteenth-century poets, for he has few affinities to make a comparison just, and his body of work was small compared to that of his compeers. But it may fairly be claimed that his voice is the most perfect of the great Victorians. He followed what Aristotle called "the main march of the human affections," and this centrality of temper must secure for him the interest of each succeeding generation. In his poetry at any rate, there are no topical accretions to pass out of date. At his best he can attain to an absolute perfection of form:—

"Till at last
The longed-for dash of waves is heard, and wide
His luminous home of waters opens, bright
And tranquil, from whose floor the new-bathed stars
Emerge, and shine upon the Aral Sea."

Sohrab and Rustum.

"And bade betwixt their shores to be
The unplumbed, salt, estranging sea."

To Marguerite

"Still nursing the unconquerable hope,
Still clutching the inviolable shade,
With a free onward impulse brushing through,
By night, the silvered branches of the glade—
Far on the forest-skirts, where none pursue,
On some mild pastoral slope
Emerge, and resting on the moonlit pales,
Freshen thy flowers, as in former years,
With dew, or listen with enchanted ears,
From the dark dingles, to the nightingales!"

The Scholar-Gipsy.

"Too quick despairer, wherefore wilt thou go?
Soon will the high Midsummer pomps come on,
Soon will the musk carnations break and swell,
Soon shall we have gold-dusted snapdragon,
Sweet-William with his homely cottage-smell,
And stocks in fragrant blow;
Roses that down the alleys shine afar,
And open, jasmine-muffled lattices,
And groups under the dreaming garden-trees,
And the full moon, and the white evening-star."

Thyrsis.

"Hear it from thy broad lucent Arno-vale
(For there thine earth-forgetting eyelids keep
The morningless and unawakening sleep
Under the flowery oleanders pale)." *Thyrsis.*

At his best, too, he has the "happy country tone, and no poet, save Shakspeare, has so painted the essen tial English landscape, the water meadows and th soft green Midland hills. To lovers of Oxford in especia he must always make a profound appeal, for they wil find in him not only Godstow and Bablock-hythe anc Cumner and the stripling Thames, but the moods anc the tastes of their first youth. Above all, he has something of Wordsworth's "healing power." His grave, clean, transparent verse, his high and delicate seriousness, his fidelity to truth, his fortitude, which may be sprung from disillusion but is none the less built on a strong faith and mellowed by a warm humanity, will always soothe and comfort many who are weary of headier draughts.

JOHN BUCHAN.

Bibliography.—Matthew Arnold's *Works* were published in 1903–4 by Macmillan in 15 vols. There is a one-volume edition of his poetry. Good critical studies will be found in Swinburne's *Essays and Studies*, Oliver Elton's *Survey of English Literature*, 1830–1880, Vol. I., and Sir A. Quiller-Couch's *Studies in Literature* (1918). There are short *Lives* by George Saintsbury (1899), Herbert Paul (1902), and G. W. Russell (1904).

What poets feel not, when they make,
A pleasure in creating,
The world, in *its* turn, will not take
Pleasure in contemplating.

POEMS OF MATTHEW ARNOLD

SOHRAB AND RUSTUM[1]

AN EPISODE

the first grey of morning filled the east,
the fog rose out of the Oxus ...
all the Tartar
hushed, and s
alone; he sl
had lain wakeful, tossing on his bed;
when the grey dawn stole into his tent,
and clad himself, and girt his sword,
took his horseman's cloak, and left his tent,
went abroad into the cold wet fog,
ugh the dim camp to Peran-Wisa's tent.
Through the black Tartar tents ...
tering ... uch stood
Oxus,
en the
in the black tents ... in high Pamere;
to a hillock came, a little back
the stream's brink, the spot where first a boat,
ng the stream in summer, scrapes the land.
men of former times had crowned the top
a clay fort; but that was fallen, and now

[1] The small arabic numerals, here and elsewhere, refer to the ... at end.

The Tartars built there Peran-Wisa's tent,
A dome of laths, and o'er it felts were spread.
And Sohrab came there, and went in, and stood
Upon the thick piled carpets in the tent,
And found the old man sleeping on his bed
Of rugs and felts, and near him lay his arms.
And Peran-Wisa heard him, though the step
Was dulled; for he slept light, an old man's sleep;
And he rose quickly on one arm, and said:—
"Who art thou? for it is not yet clear dawn.
Speak! is there news, or any night alarm?"
But Sohrab came to the bedside, and said:—
"Thou know'st me, Peran-Wisa! it is I.
The sun is not yet risen, and the foe
Sleep; but I sleep not; all night long I lie
Tossing and wakeful, and I come to thee.
For so did King Afrasiab bid me seek
Thy counsel, and to heed thee as thy son,
In Samarcand, before the army marched;
And I will tell thee what my heart desires.
Thou know'st if, since from Ader-baijan first
I came among the Tartars and bore arms,
I have still served Afrasiab well, and shown,
At my boy's years, the courage of a man.
This too thou know'st, that, while I still bear on
The conquering Tartar ensigns through the world,
And beat the Persians back on every field,
I seek one man, one man, and one alone—
Rustum, my father; who, I hoped, should greet,
Should one day greet, upon some well-fought field,
His not unworthy, not inglorious son.
So I long hoped, but him I never find.
Come then, hear now, and grant me what I ask.
Let the two armies rest to-day; but I
Will challenge forth the bravest Persian lords
To meet me, man to man; if I prevail,
Rustum will surely hear it; if I fall—
Old man, the dead need no one, claim no kin.

Dim is the rumour of a common fight,
Where host meets host, and many names are sunk:
of a single combat fame speaks clear."
He spoke; and Peran-Wisa took the hand
the young man in his, and sighed, and said—
"O Sohrab, an unquiet heart is thine!
Canst thou not rest among the Tartar chiefs,
And share the battle's common chance with us
Who love thee, but must press for ever first,
In single fight incurring single risk,
To find a father thou hast never seen?
That were far best, my son, to stay with us

Seek him in peace, and carry to his arms,
O Sohrab, carry an unwounded son!

But now he keeps apart, and sits at home,
In Seistan, with Zal, his father old.

odes

To seek thy father, not seek single fights
In vain!—but who can keep the lion's cub

And threw a white cloak round him, and he took
In his right hand a ruler's staff, no sword;
And on his head he set his sheep-skin cap,
Black, glossy, curled, the fleece of Kara-Kul;
And raised the curtain of his tent, and called
His herald to his side, and went abroad.
The sun, by this, had risen, and cleared the fog
From the broad Oxus and the glittering sands.
And from their tents the Tartar horsemen filed
Into the open plain; so Haman bade—
Haman, who next to Peran-Wisa ruled
The host, and still was in his lusty prime.
From their black tents, long files of horse, they strea
As when, some grey November morn, the files,
In marching order spread, of long-necked cranes
Stream over Casbin, and the southern slopes
Of Elburz, from the Aralian estuaries,
Or some frore Caspian reed-bed, southward bound
For the warm Persian sea-board—so they streame
The Tartars of the Oxus, the King's guard,
First, with black sheep-skin caps and with long spe
Large men, large steeds; who from Bokhara come
And Khiva, and ferment the milk of mares.
Next, the more temperate Toorkmuns of the soutl
The Tukas, and the lances of Salore,
And those from Attruck and the Caspian sands;
Light men, and on light steeds, who only drink
The acrid milk of camels, and their wells.
And then a swarm of wandering horse, who came
From far, and a more doubtful service owned;
The Tartars of Ferghana, from the banks
Of the Jaxartes, men with scanty beards
And close-set skull-caps; and those wilder hordes
Who roam o'er Kipchak and the northern waste,
Kalmuks and unkempt Kuzzaks, tribes who stray
Nearest the Pole, and wandering Kirghizzes,
Who come on shaggy ponies from Pamere.
These all filed out from camp into the plain.

And on the other side the Persians formed;
First a light cloud of horse, Tartars they seemed,
The Ilyats of Khorassan; and behind,
The royal troops of Persia, horse and foot,
Marshalled battalions bright in burnished steel.
But Peran-Wisa with his herald came
Threading the Tartar squadrons to the front,
And with his staff kept back the foremost ranks.
And when Ferood, who led the Persians, saw
That Peran-Wisa kept the Tartars back,
He took his spear, and to the front he came,
And checked his ranks, and fixed them where they stood.
And the old Tartar came upon the sand
Betwixt the silent hosts, and spake, and said:—
"Ferood, and ye, Persians and Tartars, hear!
Let there be truce between the hosts to-day.
But choose a champion from the Persian lords
To fight our champion Sohrab, man to man."
As, in the country, on a morn in June,
When the dew glistens on the pearled ears,
A shiver runs through the deep corn for joy—
So, when they heard what Peran-Wisa said,
A thrill through all the Tartar squadrons ran
Of pride and hope for Sohrab, whom they loved.
But as a troop of pedlars, from Cabool,
Cross underneath the Indian Caucasus,
That vast sky-neighbouring mountain of milk snow,
Winding so high, that, as they mount, they pass
Long flocks of travelling birds dead on the snow,
Choked by the air, and scarce can they themselves
Slake their parched throats with sugared mulberries—
In single file they move, and stop their breath,
For fear they should dislodge the o'erhanging snows—
So the pale Persians held their breath with fear
And to Ferood his brother chiefs came up
To counsel; Gudurz and Zoarrah came,
And Feraburz, who ruled the Persian host
Second, and was the uncle of the King,

These came and counselled, and then Gudurz said
" Ferood, shame bids us take their challenge up,
Yet champion have we none to match this youth.
He has the wild stag's foot, the lion's heart.
But Rustum came last night ; aloof he sits
And sullen, and has pitched his tents apart.
Him will I seek, and carry to his ear
The Tartar challenge, and this young man's name!
Haply he will forget his wrath, and fight.
Stand forth the while, and take their challenge up.
So spake he ; and Ferood stood forth and said :-
" Old man, be it agreed as thou hast said.
Let Sohrab arm, and we will find a man."
He spoke ; and Peran-Wisa turned, and strode
Back through the opening squadrons to his tent.
But through the anxious Persians Gudurz ran,
And crossed the camp which lay behind, and reach
Out on the sands beyond it, Rustum's tents.
Of scarlet cloth they were, and glittering gay,
Just pitched : the high pavilion in the midst
Was Rustum's, and his men lay camped around.
And Gudurz entered Rustum's tent, and found
Rustum ; his morning meal was done, but still
The table stood before him, charged with food ;
A side of roasted sheep, and cakes of bread,
And dark green melons ; and there Rustum sate
Listless, and held a falcon on his wrist,
And played with it ; but Gudurz came and stood
Before him ; and he looked, and saw him stand ;
And with a cry sprang up, and dropped the bird,
And greeted Gudurz with both hands, and said :—
" Welcome ! these eyes could see no better sigh
What news ? but sit down first, and eat and drink
But Gudurz stood in the tent door, and said :—
" Not now ! a time will come to eat and drink,
But not to-day ! to-day has other needs.
The armies are drawn out, and stand at gaze ;
For from the Tartars is a challenge brought

Come down and help us, Rustum, or we lose."
He spoke; but Rustum answered with a smile:—
"Go to! if Iran's chiefs are old, then I
Am older; if the young are weak, the King
Errs strangely; for the King, for Kai Khosroo,
Himself is young, and honours younger men,
And lets the aged moulder to their graves.
Rustum he loves no more, but loves the young—

A son so famed, so brave, to send to war,
And I to tarry with the snow-haired Zal,
My father, whom the robber Afghans vex,

an,

And with these slaughterous hands draw sword no more."
He spoke, and smiled; and Gudurz made reply:—
"What then, O Rustum, will men say to this,
When Sohrab dares our bravest forth, and seeks
Thee most of all, and thou, whom most he seeks,
Hidest thy face? Take heed lest men should say:
Like some old miser, Rustum hoards his fame,
And shuns to peril it with younger men."

And, greatly moved, then Rustum made reply :—
" O Gudurz, wherefore dost thou say such words ?
Thou knowest better words than this to say.
What is one more, one less, obscure or famed,
Valiant or craven, young or old, to me ?
Are not they mortal, am not I myself ?
But who for men of nought would do great deeds ?
Come, thou shalt see how Rustum hoards his fame !
But I will fight unknown, and in plain arms ;
Let not men say of Rustum, he was matched
In single fight with any mortal man."
He spoke, and frowned ; and Gudurz turned, and ran
Back quickly through the camp in fear and joy,
Fear at his wrath, but joy that Rustum came.
But Rustum strode to his tent door, and called
His followers in, and bade them bring his arms,
And clad himself in steel ; the arms he chose
Were plain, and on his shield was no device,
Only his helm was rich, inlaid with gold,
And from the fluted spine atop a plume
Of horsehair waved, a scarlet horsehair plume.
So armed he issued forth ; and Ruksh, his horse,
Followed him like a faithful hound at heel,
Ruksh, whose renown was noised through all the eart
The horse, whom Rustum on a foray once
Did in Bokhara by the river find
A colt beneath its dam, and drove him home,
And reared him ; a bright bay, with lofty crest,
Dight with a saddle-cloth of broidered green
Crusted with gold, and on the ground were worked
All beasts of chase, all beasts which hunters know ;
So followed, Rustum left his tents, and crossed
The camp, and to the Persian host appeared.
And all the Persians knew him, and with shouts
Hailed ; but the Tartars knew not who he was.
And dear as the wet diver to the eyes
Of his pale wife who waits and weeps on shore,
By sandy Bahrein, in the Persian Gulf,

So dear to the pale Persians Rustum came.
And Rustum to the Persian front advan
And Sohrab armed in Haman's tent, and came.
And as afield the reapers cut a swath

So on each side were squares of men, with spears
Bristling, and in the midst, the open sand.
And Rustum came upon the sand, and cast
His eyes towards the Tartar tents, and saw
Sohrab come forth, and eyed him as he came.
As some rich woman, on a winter's morn,

When the frost flowers the whitened window panes-
And wonders how she lives, and what the thoughts
Of that poor drudge may be, so Rustum eyed
afar

His spirited air, and wondered who he was
For very young he seemed, tenderly reared,

And a deep pity entered Rustum's soul
As he beheld him coming, and he stood,
And beckoned to him with his hand, and said —
" O thou young man, the air of Heaven is soft,
And warm, and pleasant ; but the grave is cold.
Heaven's air is better than the cold dead grave.

Behold me! I am vast, and clad in iron,
And tried; and I have stood on many a field
Of blood, and I have fought with many a foe—
Never was that field lost, or that foe saved.
O Sohrab, wherefore wilt thou rush on death?
Be governed! quit the Tartar host, and come
To Iran, and be as my son to me,
And fight beneath my banner till I die.
There are no youths in Iran brave as thou."
  So he spake, mildly; Sohrab heard his voice,
The mighty voice of Rustum, and he saw
His giant figure planted on the sand,
Sole, like some single tower, which a chief
Hath builded on the waste in former years
Against the robbers; and he saw that head,
Streaked with its first grey hairs;—hope filled his soul,
And he ran forward and embraced his knees,
And clasped his hand within his own and said:—
  "Oh, by thy father's head! by thine own soul!
Art thou not Rustum? speak! art thou not he?"
  But Rustum eyed askance the kneeling youth,
And turned away, and spoke to his own soul:—
  "Ah me, I muse what this young fox may mean!
False, wily, boastful, are these Tartar boys.
For if I now confess this thing he asks,
And hide it not, but say: *Rustum is here!*
He will not yield indeed, nor quit our foes,
But he will find some pretext not to fight,
And praise my fame, and proffer courteous gifts,
A belt or sword perhaps, and go his way.
And on a feast-tide, in Afrasiab's hall,
In Samarcand, he will arise and cry:
'I challenged once, when the two armies camped
Beside the Oxus, all the Persian lords
To cope with me in single fight; but they
Shrank, only Rustum dared; then he and I
Changed gifts, and went on equal terms away.'
So will he speak, perhaps, while men applaud;

Then were the chiefs of Iran shamed through me."

By challenge forth : make good thy vaunt, or yield !

But being what I am, I tell thee this ;
Do thou record it in thine inmost soul :
Either thou shalt renounce thy vaunt, and yield ;
Or else thy bones shall strew this sand, till winds
Bleach them, or Oxus with his summer floods,
Oxus in summer wash them all away "
He spoke ; and Sohrab answered, on his feet :—
" Art thou so fierce ? Thou wilt not fright me so.
I am no girl, to be made pale by words.
Yet this thou hast said well, did Rustum stand
Here on this field, there were no fighting then
But Rustum is far hence, and we stand here
Begin ! thou art more vast, more dread than I,
And thou art proved, I know, and I am young—
But yet success sways with the breath of Heaven.
And though thou thinkest that thou knowest sure
Thy victory, yet thou canst not surely know.
For we are all, like swimmers in the sea,

His spear ; down from the shoulder, down it came,
As on some partridge in the corn a hawk

d me! I am vast, and clad in iron,
ried; and I have stood on many a field
ood, and I have fought with many a foe—
: was that field lost, or that foe saved.
rab, wherefore wilt thou rush on death?
verned! quit the Tartar host, and come
an, and be as my son to me,
ight beneath my banner till I die.
: are no youths in Iran brave as thou."
he spake, mildly; Sohrab heard his voice,
nighty voice of Rustum, and he saw
iant figure planted on the sand,
like some single tower, which a chief
builded on the waste in former years
nst the robbers; and he saw that head,
ked with its first grey hairs;—hope filled his soul,
he ran forward and embraced his knees,
clasped his hand within his own and said:— B.
)h, by thy father's head! by thine own soul!
hou not Rustum? speak! art thou not he?"
t Rustum eyed askance the kneeling youth,
turned away, and spoke to his own soul:—
\h me, I muse what this young fox may mean!
:, wily, boastful, are these Tartar boys.
f I now confess this thing he asks,
hide it not, but say: *Rustum is here!*
rill not yield indeed, nor quit our foes,
ie will find some pretext not to fight,
praise my fame, and proffer courteous gifts,
lt or sword perhaps, and go his way.
on a feast-tide, in Afrasiab's hall,
umarcand, he will arise and cry:
iallenged once, when the two armies camped
le the Oxus, all the Persian lords
ope with me in single fight; but they
nk, only Rustum dared; then he and I
ged gifts, and went on equal terms away.'
ill he speak, perhaps, while men applaud;

Ther
Ar

Then were the chiefs of Iran shamed through me."
  And then he turned, and sternly spake aloud ;—
"Rise ! wherefore dost thou vainly question thus . . .
Of Rustum ? I am here, whom thou hast called
By challen[illegible] yield !
Is it with [illegible]
Rash boy, [illegible]
For well I know, that did great Rustum stand
Before thy face this day, and were revealed
There would be then no talk of fighting more
But being what I am, I tell thee this ,
Do thou record it in thine inmost soul
Either thou shalt renounce thy vaunt, and yield ,
Or else thy bones shall strew this sand, till winds
Bleach them, or Oxus with his summer floods,
Oxus in summer wash them all away

ıat long has towered in the airy clouds
'ops like a plummet ; Sohrab saw it come,
ıd sprang aside, quick as a flash ; the spear
ssed, and went quivering down into the sand,
hich it sent flying wide ;—then Sohrab threw
turn, and full struck Rustum's shield ; sharp ran
ıe iron plates rang sharp, but turned the spear.
ıd Rustum seized his club, which none but he
ɔuld wield ; an unlopped trunk it was, and huge,
ill rough—like those which men in treeless plains
ɔ build them boats fish from the flooded rivers,
yphasis or Hydaspes, when, high up
y their dark springs, the wind in winter-time
as made in Himalayan forests wrack,
nd strewn the channels with torn boughs—so huge
he club which Rustum lifted now, and struck
ne stroke ; but again Sohrab sprang aside,
ithe as the glancing snake, and the club came
hundering to earth, and leapt from Rustum's hand
nd Rustum followed his own blow, and fell
o his knees, and with his fingers clutched the sand
nd now might Sohrab have unsheathed his sword,
nd pierced the mighty Rustum while he lay
)izzy, and on his knees, and choked with sand ;
ut he looked on, and smiled, nor bared his sword,
ut courteously drew back, and spoke, and said :—
"Thou strik'st too hard ! that club of thine will
Jpon the summer floods, and not my bones.
ut rise, and be not wroth ! not wroth am I ;
ʼo, when I see thee, wrath forsakes my soul.
'hou say'st, thou art not Rustum ; be it so.
Vho art thou then, that canst so touch my soul ?
3oy as I am, I have seen battles too ;
Iave waded foremost in their bloody waves,
ınd heard their hollow roar of dying men ;
3ut never was my heart thus touched before.
ıre they from Heaven, these softenings of the heart
) thou old warrior, let us yield to Heaven !

Come, plant we here in earth our angry spears,
And make a truce, and sit upon this sand,
And pledge each other in red wine, like friends
And thou shalt talk to me of Rustum's deeds.

Was choked with rage, at last these words broke way :-
"Girl! nimble with thy feet, not with thy hands!
Curled minion, dancer, coiner of sweet words!
Fight; let me hear thy hateful voice no more!

Remember all thy valour; try thy feints
And cunning! all the pity I had is gone,
Because thou hast shamed me before both the hosts
With thy light skipping tricks, and thy girl's wiles."
He spoke, and Sohrab kindled at his taunts,
And he too drew his sword, at once they rushed

Make often in the forest's heart at morn,
Of hewing axes, crashing trees—such blows
Rustum and Sohrab on each other hailed.
And you would say that sun and stars took part
In that unnatural conflict; for a cloud
Grew suddenly in Heaven, and darked the sun
Over the fighters' heads; and a wind rose
Under their feet, and moaning swept the plain,
And in a sandy whirlwind wrapped the pair.
In gloom they twain were wrapped, and they alon
For both the on-looking hosts on either hand
Stood in broad daylight, and the sky was pure,
And the sun sparkled on the Oxus stream.
But in the gloom they fought, with bloodshot eyes
And labouring breath; first Rustum struck the sh
Which Sohrab held stiff out; the steel-spiked spea
Rent the tough plates, but failed to reach the skin
And Rustum plucked it back with angry groan.
Then Sohrab with his sword smote Rustum's helm
Nor clove its steel quite through; but all the cres
He shore away, and that proud horsehair plume,
Never till now defiled, sank to the dust;
And Rustum bowed his head; but then the gloon
Grew blacker, thunder rumbled in the air,
And lightnings rent the cloud; and Ruksh, the hc
Who stood at hand, uttered a dreadful cry;—
No horse's cry was that, most like the roar
Of some pained desert lion, who all day
Has trailed the hunter's javelin in his side,
And comes at night to die upon the sand—
The two hosts heard that cry, and quaked for fear
And Oxus curdled as it crossed his stream.
But Sohrab heard, and quailed not, but rushed on
And struck again; and again Rustum bowed
His head; but this time all the blade, like glass,
Sprang in a thousand shivers on the helm,
And in the hand the hilt remained alone.
Then Rustum raised his head; his dreadful eyes

The cloud, and the two armies saw the pair,
Saw Rustum standing, safe upon his feet,
And Sohrab, wounded, on the bloody sand
Then, with a bitter smile, Rustum began —
"Sohrab, thou thoughtest in thy mind to kill
A Persian lord this day, and strip his corpse,
And bear thy trophies to Afrasiab's tent
Or else that the great Rustum would come down
Himself to fight, and that thy wiles would move
His heart to take a gift, and let thee go
And then that all the Tartar host would praise
Thy courage or thy craft, and spread thy fame,
To glad thy father in his weak old age
Fool, thou art slain, and by an unknown man!
Dearer to the red jackals shalt thou be
Than to thy friends, and to thy father old"
And, with a fearless mien, Sohrab replied —
"Unknown thou art; yet thy fierce vaunt is vain.

And I were he who till to-day I was,
They should be lying here, I standing there.
But that belovéd name unnerved my arm—
That name, and something, I confess, in thee
Which troubles all my heart, and made my s
Fall; and thy spear transfixed an unarmed
And now thou boastest, and insult'st my fa
But hear thou this, fierce man,

The mighty Rustum shall avenge my death;
My father, whom I seek through all the world,
He shall avenge my death, and punish thee."
As when some hunter in the spring hath found
A breeding eagle sitting on her nest,
Upon the craggy isle of a hill lake,
And pierced her with an arrow as she rose,
And followed her to find her where she fell
Far off;—anon her mate comes winging back
From hunting, and a great way off descries
His huddling young left sole; at that, he checks
His pinion, and with short uneasy sweeps
Circles above his eyry, with loud screams
Chiding his mate back to her nest; but she
Lies dying, with the arrow in her side,
In some far stony gorge out of his ken,
A heap of fluttering feathers—never more
Shall the lake glass her, flying over it;
Never the black and dripping precipices
Echo her stormy scream as she sails by—
As that poor bird flies home, nor knows his loss,
So Rustum knew not his own loss, but stood
Over his dying son, and knew him not.
But with a cold, incredulous voice, he said:—
"What prate is this of fathers and revenge?
The mighty Rustum never had a son."
And, with a failing voice, Sohrab replied:—
"Ah yes, he had! and that lost son am I.
Surely the news will one day reach his ear,
Reach Rustum, where he sits, and tarries long,
Somewhere, I know not where, but far from here
And pierce him like a stab, and make him leap
To arms, and cry for vengeance upon thee.
Fierce man, bethink thee, for an only son!
What will that grief, what will that vengeance be
Oh, could I live, till I that grief had seen!
Yet him I pity not so much, but her,
My mother, who in Ader-baijan dwells

With that old king, her father, who grows grey
With age, and rules over the valiant Koords.
Her most I pity, who no more will see
Sohrab returning from the Tartar camp,
With spoils and honour, when the war is done.
But a dark rumour will be bruited up,
From tribe to tribe, until it reach her ear;

ud,

thought.

Who spoke, although he called back names he knew
For he had had sure tidings that the babe,
Which was in Ader-baijan born to him,
Had been a puny girl, no boy at all—
So that sad mother sent him word, for fear
Rustum should take the boy, to train in arms—
And so he deemed that either Sohrab took,
By a false boast, the style of Rustum's son,

At the full moon, tears gathered in his eyes,
For he remembered his own early youth,

1;

id

They three, in that long-distant summer-time—

The castle, and the dewy woods, and hunt
And hound, and morn on those delightful hills
In Ader-baijan. And he saw that Youth,
Of age and looks to be his own dear son,
Piteous and lovely, lying on the sand,
Like some rich hyacinth, which by the scythe
Of an unskilful gardener has been cut,
Mowing the garden grass-plots near its bed,
And lies, a fragrant tower of purple bloom,
On the mown, dying grass—so Sohrab lay,
Lovely in death, upon the common sand.
And Rustum gazed on him with grief, and sai
"O Sohrab, thou indeed art such a son
Whom Rustum, wert thou his, might well hav
Yet here thou errest, Sohrab, or else men
Have told thee false—thou art not Rustum's
For Rustum had no son; one child he had—
But one—a girl; who with her mother now
Plies some light female task, nor dreams of us
Of us she dreams not, nor of wounds, nor wai
But Sohrab answered him in wrath; for nc
The anguish of the deep-fixed spear grew fierc
And he desirèd to draw forth the steel,
And let the blood flow free, and so to die;
But first he would convince his stubborn foe.
And, rising sternly on one arm, he said:—
"Man, who art thou who dost deny my wo
Truth sits upon the lips of dying men,
And falsehood, while I lived, was far from mi
I tell thee, pricked upon this arm I bear
That seal which Rustum to my mother gave,
That she might prick it on the babe she bore.
He spoke; and all the blood left Rustum's
And his knees tottered, and he smote his han
Against his breast, his heavy mailèd hand,
That the hard iron corslet clanked aloud;
And to his heart he pressed the other hand,
And in a hollow voice he spake, and said:—

"Sohrab, that were a proof which could not lie;

An emperor's gift—at early morn he paints,
'amp
—

A helpless babe, among the mountain rocks
Him that kind creature found, and reared, and loved—
Then Rustum took it for his glorious sign.
—
"How say'st thou? Is that sign the proper sign
Of Rustum's son, or of some other man's?"
He spoke; but Rustum gazed, and gazed, and stood
Speechless; and then he uttered one sharp cry:
O boy—thy father!—and his voice choked there.
And then a dark cloud passed before his eyes,
And his head swam, and he sank down to earth

In both his hands the dust which lay around,

or

To draw it, and for ever let life out.
But Sohrab saw his thought, and held his hands,
And with a soothing voice he spoke, and said :—
" Father, forbear ! for I but meet to-day
The doom that at my birth was written down
In Heaven, and thou art Heaven's unconscious hand.
Surely my heart cried out that it was thou,
When first I saw thee ; and thy heart spoke too,
I know it ! but fate trod those promptings down
Under its iron heel ; fate, fate engaged
The strife, and hurled me on my father's spear.
But let us speak no more of this ! I find
My father ; let me feel that I have found !
Come, sit beside me on this sand, and take
My head betwixt thy hands, and kiss my cheeks,
And wash them with thy tears, and say : *My son !*
Quick ! quick ! for numbered are my sands of life,
And swift ; for like the lightning to this field
I came, and like the wind I go away—
Sudden, and swift, and like a passing wind.
But it was writ in Heaven that this should be."
So said he, and his voice released the heart
Of Rustum, and his tears broke forth ; he cast
His arms round his son's neck, and wept aloud,
And kissed him. And awe fell on both the hosts
When they saw Rustum's grief ; and Ruksh the horse,
With his head bowing to the ground and mane
Sweeping the dust, came near, and in mute woe
First to the one then to the other moved
His head, as if inquiring what their grief
Might mean ; and from his dark, compassionate eyes,
The big warm tears rolled down, and caked the sand.
But Rustum chid him with stern voice, and said :—
" Ruksh, now thou grievest ; but, O Ruksh, thy feet
Should then have rotted on their nimble joints,
When first they bore thy master to this field ! "
But Sohrab looked upon the horse and said :—
" Is this, then, Ruksh ? How often, in past days,

My mother told me of thee, thou brave steed!
My terrible father's terrible horse; and said,
That I should one day find thy lord and thee.
Come, let me lay my hand upon thy mane!
O Ruksh, thou art more fortunate than I!
For thou hast gone where I shall never go,
And snuffed the breezes of my father's home;
And thou hast trod the sands of Seistan,
And seen the River of Helmund, and the Lake
Of Zirrah; and the aged Zal himself
Has often stroked thy neck, and given thee food,
Corn in a golden platter soaked with wine,
And said: *O Ruksh! bear Rustum well!*—but I
Have never known my grandsire's furrowed face,
Nor seen his lofty house in Seistan,
Nor slaked my thirst at the clear Helmund stream;
But lodged among my father's foes, and seen
Afrasiab's cities only, Samarcand,
Bokhara, and lone Khiva in the waste,
And the black Toorkmun tents, and only drunk
The desert rivers, Moorghab and Tejend,
Kohik, and where the Kalmuks feed their sheep,
The northern Sir; and this great Oxus stream,
The yellow Oxus, by whose brink I die."
  And, with a heavy groan, Rustum replied:—
"Oh, that its waves were flowing over me!
Oh, that I saw its grains of yellow silt

As some are born to be obscured, and die.
Do thou the deeds I die too young to do,
And reap a second glory in thine age!
Thou art my father, and thy gain is mine.
But come! thou seest this great host of men
Which follow me; I pray thee, slay not these!
Let me entreat for them; what have they done?

They followed me, my hope, my fame, my star.
Let them all cross the Oxus back in peace.
But me thou must bear hence, not send with the
But carry me with thee to Seistan,
And place me on a bed, and mourn for me,
Thou, and the snow-haired Zal, and all thy frien
And thou must lay me in that lovely earth,
And heap a stately mound above my bones,
And plant a far-seen pillar over all;
That so the passing horseman on the waste
May see my tomb a great way off, and say:
Sohrab, the mighty Rustum's son, lies there,
Whom his great father did in ignorance kill—
And I be not forgotten in my grave."
  And, with a mournful voice, Rustum replied:-
"Fear not! as thou hast said, Sohrab, my son,
So shall it be; for I will burn my tents,
And quit the host, and bear thee hence with me,
And carry thee away to Seistan,
And place thee on a bed, and mourn for thee,
With the snow-headed Zal, and all my friends.
'd I will lay thee in that lovely earth,
nd heap a stately mound above thy bones,
And plant a far-seen pillar over all,
And men shall not forget thee in thy grave.
And I will spare thy host; yea, let them go!
Let them all cross the Oxus back in peace!
What should I do with slaying any more?
For would that all whom I have ever slain
Might be once more alive; my bitterest foes,
And they who were called champions in their ti
And through whose death I won that fame I ha
And I were nothing but a common man,
A poor, mean soldier, and without renown;
So thou mightest live too, my son, my son!
Or rather would that I, even I myself,
Might now be lying on this bloody sand,
Near death, and by an ignorant stroke of thine,

Not thou of mine, and I might die, not thou;
And I, not thou, be borne to Seistan;
And Zal might weep above my grave, not thine;
And say: *O son, I weep thee not too sore,*
For willingly, I know, thou met'st thine end!
outh,

Then, at the point of death, Sohrab replied:—
"A life of blood indeed, thou dreadful man!
But thou shalt yet have peace; only not now,
Not yet! but thou shalt have it on that day,
When thou shalt sail in a high-masted ship,
Thou and the other peers of Kai-Khosroo,

He spoke, and Sohrab smiled on him, and too
The spear, and drew it from his side, and eased

The crimson torrent ran, dim now, and soiled

flow
His limbs grew slack, motionless, white, he lay—
White, with eyes closed; only when heavy gasps,
Deep, heavy gasps, quivering through all his fram
Convulsed him back to life, he opened them,
And fixed them feebly on his father's face,
his limb

world.

So, on the bloody sand, Sohrab lay dead.
And the great Rustum drew his horseman's cloak
Down o'er his face, and sate by his dead son.
As those black granite pillars, once high-reared
By Jemshid in Persepolis, to bear
His house, now, mid their broken flights of steps,
Lie prone, enormous, down the mountain side—
So in the sand lay Rustum by his son.

And night came down over the solemn waste,
And the two gazing hosts, and that sole pair,
And darkened all; and a cold fog, with night,
Crept from the Oxus. Soon a hum arose,
As of a great assembly loosed, and fires
Began to twinkle through the fog; for now
Both armies moved to camp, and took their meal
The Persians took it on the open sands
Southward, the Tartars by the river marge;
And Rustum and his son were left alone.

But the majestic river floated on,
Out of the mist and hum of that low land,
Into the frosty starlight, and there moved,
Rejoicing, through the hushed Chorasmian wast
Under the solitary moon;—he flowed
Right for the polar star, past Orgunjè,
Brimming, and bright, and large; then sands b
To hem his watery march, and dam his streams
And split his currents; that [illegible] a league
The shorn and parcelled Oxu
Through beds of sand and m
Oxus, forgetting the bright s
In his high mountain cradle
A foiled circuitous wanderer
The longed-for dash of wav
His luminous home of wate
And tranquil, from whose f
Emerge, and shine upon th

THE SICK KING IN BOKHARA

Hussein

O most just Vizier, send away
The cloth-merchants, and let them be,
Them and their dues, this day! the King
Is ill at ease and calls for thee.

The Vizier

O merchants, tarry yet a day
Here in Bokhara! but at noon
To-morrow, come, and ye shall pay
Each fortieth web of cloth to me,
As the law is, and go your way

O Hussein, lead me to the King!
Thou teller of sweet tales, thine own,
Ferdousi's, and the others', lead!
How is it with my lord?

Hussein

Alone,
Ever since prayer-time, he doth wait,
O Vizier! without lying down,
In the great window of the gate,
[illegible]
[illegible] ...laves
[illegible]
[illegible]

The King

O Vizier, I may bury him?

The Vizier

O King, thou know'st, I have been sick
These many days, and heard no thing

(For Allah shut my ears and mind),
Not even what thou dost, O King!
Wherefore, that I may counsel thee,
Let Hussein, if thou wilt, make haste
To speak in order what hath chanced.

The King

O Vizier, be it as thou say'st!

Hussein

Three days since, at the time of prayer
A certain Moollah, with his robe
All rent, and dust upon his hair,
Watched my lord's coming forth, and p
The golden mace-bearers aside,
And fell at the King's feet, and cried:

" Justice, O King, and on myself!
On this great sinner, who hath broke
The law, and by the law must die!
Vengeance, O King!"

But the King spoke:
" What fool is this, that hurts our ears
With folly? or what drunken slave?
My guards, what, prick him with your
Prick me the fellow from the path!"
As the King said, so was it done,
And to the mosque my lord passed on.

But on the morrow, when the King
Went forth again, the holy book
Carried before him, as is right,
And through the square his path he to
My man comes running, flecked with b
From yesterday, and falling down
Cries out most earnestly: " O King,
My lord, O King, do right, I pray!

"How canst thou, ere thou hear, discern
If I speak folly? but a king,
Whether a thing be great or small,
Like Allah, hears and judges all.

"Wherefore hear thou! Thou know'st, how fierce
In these last days the sun hath burned;
That the green water in the tanks
Is to a putrid puddle turned,
And the canal, that from the stream
Of Samarcand is brought this way,
Wastes, and runs thinner every day.

"Now I at nightfall had gone forth
Alone, and in a darksome place
Under some mulberry trees I found
A little pool, and in brief space
With all the water that was there
I filled my pitcher, and stole home
Unseen, and having drink to spare,
I hid the can behind the door,
And went up on the roof to sleep.

"But in the night, which was with wind
And burning dust, again I creep
Down, having fever, for a drink.

"Now meanwhile had my brethren found
The water-pitcher, where it stood
Behind the door upon the ground,
And called my mother; and they all
As they were thirsty, and the night
Most sultry, drained the pitcher there,
That they sate with it in my sight,
Their lips still wet, when I came down.

"Now mark! I, being fevered, sick
(Most unblest also), at that sight

Brake forth, and cursed them—dost tho
One was my mother——Now, do right !

But my lord mused a space, and said :
" Send him away, Sirs, and make on !
It is some madman," the King said.
As the King said, so was it done.

The morrow, at the self-same hour,
In the King's path, behold, the man,
Not kneeling, sternly fixed ! he stood
Right opposite, and thus began,
Frowning grim down : " Thou wicked Ki
Most deaf where thou shouldst most give
What, must I howl in the next world,
Because thou wilt not listen here ?

" What, wilt thou pray, and get thee gra
And all grace shall to me be grudged ?
Nay, but I swear, from this thy path
I will not stir till I be judged."

Then they who stood about the King
Drew close together and conferred ;
Till that the King stood forth and said :
" Before the priests thou shalt be heard."

But when the Ulemas were met
And the thing heard, they doubted not ;
But sentenced him, as the law is,
To die by stoning on the spot.

Now the King charged us secretly :
" Stoned must he be, the law stands so.
Yet, if he seek to fly, give way !
Hinder him not, but let him go."

So saying, the King took a stone,
And cast it softly ;—but the man,

With a great joy upon his face,
Kneeled down, and cried not, neither ran.

So they, whose lot it was, cast stones,
That they flew thick and bruised him sore;
But he praised Allah with loud voice,
And remained kneeling as before.

My lord had covered up his face;
But when one told him, "He is dead!"
Turning him quickly to go in,
"Bring thou to me his corpse," he said.

And truly, while I speak, O King,
I hear the bearers on the stair!
Wilt thou they straightway bring him in?
—Ho! enter ye who tarry there!

The Vizier

O King, in this I praise thee not!
Now must I call thy grief not wise.
Is he thy friend, or of thy blood,
To find such favour in thine eyes?

Nay, were he thine own mother's son,
Still, thou art king, and the law stands.
It were not meet the balance swerved,
The sword were broken in thy hands.

But being nothing, as he is

But who, through all this length of time

Fathers we *must* have, wife and child,
And grievous is the grief for these ;
This pain alone, which *must* be borne,
Makes the head white, and bows the knees.

But other loads than this his own
One man is not well made to bear.
Besides, to each are his own friends,
To mourn with him and show him care.

Look, this is but one single place,
Though it be great ; all the earth round,
If a man bear to have it so,
Things which might vex him shall be found.

Upon the Russian frontier, where
The watchers of two armies stand
Near one another, many a man,
Seeking a prey unto his hand,

Hath snatched a little fair-haired slave ;
They snatch also, towards Mervè,
The Shiah dogs, who pasture sheep,
And up from thence to Orgunjè.

And these all, labouring for a lord,
Eat not the fruit of their own hands ;
Which is the heaviest of all plagues,
To that man's mind, who understands.

The kaffirs also (whom God curse !)
Vex one another, night and day ;
There are the lepers, and all sick ;
There are the poor, who faint alway.

All these have sorrow, and keep still,
Whilst other men make cheer, and sing.

Wilt thou have pity on all these?
No, nor on this dead dog, O King!

The King

O Vizier, thou art old, I young!
[illegible]

But hear ye this, ye sons of men!
They that bear rule, and are obeyed,
Unto a rule more strong than theirs
Are in their turn obedient made.

In vain therefore, with wistful eyes
Gazing up hither, the poor man,
Who loiters by the high-heaped booths,
Below there, in the Registàn,

Says: "Happy he, who lodges there!
With silken raiment, store of rice,
And for this drought, all kinds of fruits,
Grape syrup, squares of coloured ice,

"With cherries served in drifts of snow."
In vain hath a king power to build
Houses, arcades, enamelled mosques;
And to make orchard closes, filled

With curious fruit trees brought from far;
With cisterns for the winter rain,
And in the desert, spacious inns
In divers places—if that pain

Is not more lightened, which he feels,
If his will be not satisfied;
And that it be not, from all time
The law is planted, to abide.

"Or is it that some Power, too wise, too strong,
Even for yourselves to conquer or beguile,
Bears earth, and heaven, and men, and gods along,
Like the broad volume of the insurgent Nile?
And the great powers we serve, themselves may be
Slaves of a tyrannous necessity?

"Or in mid-heaven, perhaps, your golden cars,
Where earthly voice climbs never, wing their flight
And in wild hunt, through mazy tracts of stars,
Sweep in the sounding stillness of the night?
Or in deaf ease, on thrones of dazzling sheen,
Drinking deep draughts of joy, ye dwell serene?

"Oh, wherefore cheat our youth, if thus it be,
Of one short joy, one lust, one pleasant dream?
Stringing vain words of powers we cannot see,
Blind divinations of a will supreme;
Lost labour! when the circumambient gloom
But hides, if Gods, Gods careless of our doom?

"The rest I give to joy. Even while I speak
My sand runs short; and as yon star-shot ray,
Hemmed by two banks of cloud, peers pale and weak,
Now, as the barrier closes, dies away;
Even so do past and future intertwine,
Blotting this six years' space, which yet is mine.

"Six years—six little years—six drops of time!
Yet suns shall rise, and many moons shall wane,
And old men die, and young men pass their prime,
And languid pleasure fade and flower again;
And the dull Gods behold, ere these are flown,
Revels more deep, joy keener than their own.

"Into the silence of the groves and woods
I will go forth; though something would I say—

Something—yet what, I know not ! for the Gods
The doom they pass revoke not, nor delay ;
And prayers, and gifts, and tears, are fruitless all,
And the night waxes, and the shadows fall.

" Ye men of Egypt, ye have heard your king !
I go, and I return not. But the will
Of the great Gods is plain ; and ye must bring
Ill deeds, ill passions, zealous to fulfil
Their pleasure, to their feet ; and reap their praise,
The praise of Gods, rich boon ! and length of days."

—So spake he, half in anger, half in scorn ;
And one loud cry of grief and of amaze
Broke from his sorrowing people ; so he spake,
And turning, left them there ; and with brief pause,
Girt with a throng of revellers, bent his way
To the cool region of the groves he loved.
There by the river banks he wandered on,

Rose-crowned ; and ever, when the sun went down,

ine :

Would thrust a hand before the lifted bowl,
Whispering: *A little space, and thou art mine.*
It may be on that joyless feast his eye
Dwelt with mere outward seeming; he, within,
Took measure of his soul, and knew its strength,
And by that silent knowledge, day by day,
Was calmed, ennobled, comforted, sustained.
It may be; but not less his brow was smooth,
And his clear laugh fled ringing through the gloom,
And his mirth quailed not at the mild reproof
Sighed out by winter's sad tranquillity;
Nor, palled with its own fulness, ebbed and died
In the rich languor of long summer days;
Nor withered, when the palm-tree plumes that roofed
With their mild dark his grassy banquet-hall,
Bent to the cold winds of the showerless spring;
No, nor grew dark when autumn brought the clouds.
So six long years he revelled, night and day;
And when the mirth waxed loudest, with dull sound
Sometimes from the grove's centre echoes came,
To tell his wondering people of their king;
In the still night, across the steaming flats,
Mixed with the murmur of the moving Nile.

BALDER DEAD[3]

I. SENDING

So on the floor lay Balder dead; and round
Lay thickly strewn swords, axes, darts, and spears,
Which all the Gods in sport had idly thrown
At Balder, whom no weapon pierced or clove;
But in his breast stood fixt the fatal bough
Of mistletoe, which Lok the Accuser gave
To Hoder, and unwitting Hoder threw—
'Gainst that alone had Balder's life no charm.

And all the Gods and all the Heroes came,
And stood round Balder on the bloody floor,
Weeping and wailing; and Valhalla rang
Up to its golden roof with sobs and cries.
And on the tables stood the untasted meats,

yet

Not to lament in was Valhalla made.
If any here might weep for Balder's death
I most might weep, his father; such a son
I lose to-day, so bright, so loved a God!
But he has met that doom which long ago
The Nornies, when his mother bare him, spun,
And fate set seal, that so his end must be.
Balder has met his death, and ye survive!
Weep him an hour; but what can grief avail?
For ye yourselves, ye Gods, shall meet your doom,
All ye who hear me, and inhabit Heaven,
And I too, Odin too, the Lord of all:
But ours we shall not meet, when that day comes,
With woman's tears and weak complaining cries—
Why should we meet another's portion so?
Rather it fits you, having wept your hour,
With cold dry eyes, and hearts composed and stern,
To live, as erst, your daily life in Heaven.
By me shall vengeance on the murderer Lok,
The foe, the accuser, whom, though Gods, we hate,
Be strictly cared for, in the appointed day.
Meanwhile, to-morrow, when the morning dawns,
Bring wood to the seashore to Balder's ship,
And on the deck build high a funeral pile,
And on the top lay Balder's corpse, and put
Fire to the wood, and send him out to sea
To burn; for that is what the dead desire."
So having spoke, the king of Gods arose

And mounted his horse Sleipner, whom he rode ;
And from the hall of Heaven he rode away
To Lidskialf, and sate upon his throne,
The mount, from whence his eye surveys the world.
And far from Heaven he turned his shining orbs
To look on Midgard, and the earth, and men.
And on the conjuring Lapps he bent his gaze
Whom antlered reindeer pull over the snow ;
And on the Finns, the gentlest of mankind,
Fair men, who live in holes under the ground ;
Nor did he look once more to Ida's plain,
Nor toward Valhalla, and the sorrowing Gods ;
For well he knew the Gods would heed his word,
And cease to mourn, and think of Balder's pyre.
But in Valhalla all the Gods went back
From around Balder, all the Heroes went ;
And left his body stretched upon the floor.
And on their golden chairs they sate again,
Beside the tables, in the hall of Heaven ;
And before each the cooks who served them placed
New messes of the boar Serimner's flesh,
And the Valkyries crowned their horns with mead.
So they, with pent-up hearts and tearless eyes,
Wailing no more, in silence ate and drank,
While twilight fell, and sacred night came on.
But the blind Hoder left the feasting Gods
In Odin's hall, and went through Asgard streets,
And past the haven where the Gods have moored
Their ships, and through the gate, beyond the wall ;
Though sightless, yet his own mind led the God.
Down to the margin of the roaring sea
He came, and sadly went along the sand
Between the waves and black o'erhanging cliffs
Where in and out the screaming seafowl fly ;
Until he came to where a gully breaks
Through the cliff wall, and a fresh stream runs down
From the high moors behind, and meets the sea.
There in the glen Fensaler stands, the house

Of Frea, honoured mother of the Gods,
And shows its lighted windows to the main.
There he went up, and passed the open doors;
And in the hall he found those women old,
The prophetesses, who by right eterne
On Frea's hearth feed high the sacred fire
Both night and day; and by the inner wall
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]—
"Mother, a child of bale thou bar'st in me!
For, first, thou barest me with blinded eyes,
Sightless and helpless, wandering weak in Heaven;
And, after that, of ignorant witless mind
Thou barest me, and unforeseeing soul;
That I alone must take the branch from Lok,
The foe, the accuser, whom, though Gods, we hate,
And cast it at the dear loved Balder's breast
At whom the Gods in sport their weapons threw—
'Gainst that alone had Balder's life no charm.
Now therefore what to attempt, or whither fly,
For who will bear my hateful sight in Heaven?
Can I, O mother, bring them Balder back?
Or—for thou know'st the fates, and things allowed—
Can I with Hela's power a compact strike,
And make exchange, and give my life for his?"
  He spoke; the mother of the Gods replied.—
"Hoder, ill-fated, child of bale, my son,
Sightless in soul and eye, what words are these?
[illegible]
[illegible]
Nor doth she count this life a price for that.
For many Gods in Heaven, not thou alone,
Would freely die to purchase Balder back,
And wend themselves to Hela's gloomy realm.
For not so gladsome is that life in Heaven

Which Gods and heroes lead, in feast and fray,
Waiting the darkness of the final times,
That one should grudge its loss for Balder's sake,
Balder their joy, so bright, so loved a God.
But fate withstands, and laws forbid this way.
Yet in my secret mind one way I know,
Nor do I judge if it shall win or fail;
But much must still be tried, which shall but fail."
And the blind Hoder answered her, and said:—
"What way is this, O mother, that thou show'st?
Is it a matter which a God might try?"
And straight the mother of the Gods replied:—
"There is a way which leads to Hela's realm,
Untrodden, lonely, far from light and Heaven.
Who goes that way must take no other horse
To ride, but Sleipner, Odin's horse, alone.
Nor must he choose that common path of Gods
Which every day they come and go in Heaven,
O'er the bridge Bifrost, where is Heimdall's watch,
Past Midgard fortress, down to earth and men.
But he must tread a dark untravelled road
Which branches from the north of Heaven, and ride
Nine days, nine nights, toward the northern ice,
Through valleys deep-engulphed, with roaring streams
And he will reach on the tenth morn a bridge
Which spans with golden arches Giall's stream,
Not Bifrost, but that bridge a damsel keeps,
Who tells the passing troops of dead their way
To the low shore of ghosts, and Hela's realm.
And she will bid him northward steer his course;
Then he will journey through no lighted land,
Nor see the sun arise, nor see it set;
But he must ever watch the northern bear
Who from her frozen height with jealous eye
Confronts the dog and hunter in the south,
And is alone not dipt in Ocean's stream.
And straight he will come down to Ocean's strand—
Ocean, whose watery ring enfolds the world,

And on whose marge the ancient giants dwell.
But he will reach its unknown northern shore,
Far, far beyond the outmost giant's home,
At the chinked fields of ice, the waste of snow;
And he must fare across the dismal ice
Northward, until he meets a stretching wall
Barring his way, and in the wall a grate.
But then he must dismount, and on the ice

And hear the roaring of the streams of Hell.
And he will see the feeble shadowy tribes,
And Balder sitting crowned, and Hela's throne.
Then he must not regard the wailful ghosts
Who all will flit, like eddying leaves, around;
But he must straight accost their solemn queen,

If haply he may melt her heart with words,
And make her yield, and give him Balder back."
  She spoke; but Hoder answered her and said:—
"Mother, a dreadful way is this thou show'st!

But he whom first thou meetest when thou com'st
To Asgard, and declar'st this hidden way,
Shall go; and I will be his guide unseen."
  She spoke, and on her face let fall her veil,
And bowed her head, and sate with folded hands.
But at the central hearth those women old,
Who while the Mother spake had ceased their toil,
Began again to heap the sacred fire.
And Hoder turned, and left his mother's house,
Fensaler, whose lit windows look to sea;

And came again down to the roaring waves,
And back along the beach to Asgard went,
Pondering on that which Frea said should be.
  But night came down and darkened Asgard streets.
Then from their loathèd feast the Gods arose,
And lighted torches, and took up the corpse
Of Balder from the floor of Odin's hall,
And laid it on a bier, and bare him home
Through the fast-darkening streets to his own house,
Breidablik, on whose columns Balder graved
The enchantments that recall the dead to life.
For wise he was, and many curious arts,
Postures of runes, and healing herbs he knew;
Unhappy! but that art he did not know,
To keep his own life safe, and see the sun!
There to his hall the Gods brought Balder home,
And each bespake him as he laid him down:—
  "Would that ourselves, O Balder, we were borne
Home to our halls, with torchlight, by our kin,
o thou might'st live, and still delight the Gods!"
  They spake; and each went home to his own house.
ut there was one, the first of all the Gods
r speed, and Hermod was his name in Heaven
ost fleet he was, but now he went the last,
eavy in heart for Balder, to his house
Which he in Asgard built him, there to dwell,
gainst the harbour, by the city wall—
im the blind Hoder met, as he came up
rom the sea cityward, and knew his step;
or yet could Hermod see his brother's face,
or it grew dark; but Hoder touched his arm.
nd as a spray of honeysuckle flowers
rushes across a tirèd traveller's face
ho shuffles through the deep dew-moistened dust,
n a May evening, in the darkened lanes,
nd starts him, that he thinks a ghost went by—
o Hoder brushed by Hermod's side, and said:—
  "Take Sleipner, Hermod, and set forth with dawn

For there rang note divine in that command."
  So speaking, the fleet-footed Hermod came
Home, and lay down to sleep in his own house;
And all the Gods lay down in their own homes.
And Hoder too came home, distraught with grief,
Loathing to meet, at dawn, the other Gods;
And he went in, and shut the door, and fixt
His sword upright, and fell on it, and died
  But from the hill of Lidskialf Odin rose,
The throne, from which his eye surveys the world;
And mounted Sleipner, and in darkness rode
To Asgard. And the stars came out in Heaven,
High over Asgard, to light home the King

And to [illegible]
Sleipner [illegible]
And in [illegible]
  But in Breidablik Nanna, Balder's wife,
[illegible]

And far into the night they wailed their dirge ;
But when their souls were satisfied with wail,
They went, and laid them down, and Nanna went
Into an upper chamber, and lay down ;
And Frea sealed her tirèd lids with sleep.
  And 'twas when night is bordering hard on dawn,
When air is chilliest, and the stars sunk low ;
Then Balder's spirit through the gloom drew near,
In garb, in form, in feature as he was,
Alive ; and still the rays were round his head
Which were his glorious mark in Heaven ; he stood
Over against the curtain of the bed,
And gazed on Nanna as she slept, and spake :—
  " Poor lamb, thou sleepest, and forgett'st thy woe !
Tears stand upon the lashes of thine eyes,
Tears wet the pillow by thy cheek ; but thou,
Like a young child, hast cried thyself to sleep.
Sleep on ! I watch thee, and am here to aid.
Alive I kept not far from thee, dear soul !
Neither do I neglect thee now, though dead.
For with to-morrow's dawn the Gods prepare
To gather wood, and build a funeral pile
Upon my ship, and burn my corpse with fire,
That sad, sole honour of the dead ! and thee
They think to burn, and all my choicest wealth,
With me, for thus ordains the common rite.
But it shall not be so ! but mild, but swift,
But painless shall a stroke from Frea come,
To cut thy thread of life, and free thy soul,
And they shall burn thy corpse with mine, not thee.
And well I know that by no stroke of death,
Tardy or swift, wouldst thou be loath to die,
So it restored thee, Nanna, to my side,
Whom thou so well hast loved ! but I can smooth
Thy way, and this at least my prayers avail.
Yes, and I fain would altogether ward
Death from thy head, and with the Gods in Heaven
Prolong thy life, though not by thee desired !

But right bars this, not only thy desire.
Yet dreary, Nanna, is the life they lead
In that dim world, in Hela's mouldering realm;
And doleful are the ghosts, the troops of dead,
Whom Hela with austere control presides!
For of the race of Gods is no one there,
Save me alone, and Hela, solemn queen;
And all the nobler souls of mortal men
On battle-field have met their death, and now
Feast in Valhalla, in my father's hall;
Only the inglorious sort are there below,
The old, the cowards, and the weak are there—
Men spent by sickness, or obscure decay.
But even there, O Nanna, we might find
Some solace in each other's look and speech,
Wandering together through that gloomy world,
And talking of the life we led in Heaven,
While we yet lived, among the other Gods!"
  He spake, and straight his lineaments began
To fade; and Nanna in her sleep stretched out
Her arms towards him with a cry—but he
Mournfully shook his head, and disappeared.
And as the woodman sees a little smoke
Hang in the air, afield, and disappear,
So Balder faded in the night away
And Nanna on her bed sank back, but then
Frea, the mother of the Gods, with stroke
Painless and swift, set free her airy soul,
Which took, on Balder's track, the way below;
And instantly the sacred morn appeared.

2. JOURNEY TO THE DEAD

FORTH from the east, up the ascent of Heaven,

Hereafter, in the blackest dead of night,
With shrill and dismal cries that bird shall crow,
Warning the Gods that foes draw nigh to Heaven;
But now he crew at dawn, a cheerful note,
To wake the Gods and Heroes to their tasks.
And all the Gods, and all the Heroes, woke.
And from their beds the Heroes rose, and donned
Their arms, and led their horses from the stall,
And mounted them, and in Valhalla's court
Were ranged; and then the daily fray began.
And all day long they there are hacked and hewn
'Mid dust, and groans, and limbs lopped off, and bloo
But all at night return to Odin's hall
Woundless and fresh; such lot is theirs in Heaven.
And the Valkyries on their steeds went forth
Toward earth and fights of men; and at their side
Skulda, the youngest of the Nornies, rode;
And over Bifrost, where is Heimdall's watch,
Past Midgard fortress, down to earth they came;
There through some battle-field, where men fall fast,
Their horses fetlock-deep in blood, they ride,
And pick the bravest warriors out for death,
Whom they bring back with them at night to Heave
To glad the Gods, and feast in Odin's hall.
But the Gods went not now, as otherwhile,
Into the tilt-yard, where the Heroes fought,
To feast their eyes with looking on the fray;
Nor did they to their judgment-place repair
By the ash Igdrasil, in Ida's plain,
Where they hold council, and give laws for men;
But they went, Odin first, the rest behind,
To the hall Gladheim, which is built of gold;
Where are in circle ranged twelve golden chairs,
And in the midst one higher, Odin's throne.
There all the Gods in silence sate them down;
And thus the father of the ages spake:—
"Go quickly, Gods, bring wood to the seashore,
With all, which it beseems the dead to have,

And make a funeral pile on Balder's ship!
On the twelfth day the Gods shall burn his corpse.
But Hermod, thou, take Sleipner, and ride down
To Hela's kingdom, to ask Balder back!"
So said he; and the Gods arose, and took
Axes and ropes, and at their head came Thor,
Shouldering his hammer, which the giants know.
Forth wended they, and drave their steeds before.
And up the dewy mountain tracks they fared
[illegible]

And burst their roots, while to their tops the Gods
[illegible]

[illegible]

Asgard, and led their horses to the beach,
And loosed them of their loads on the seashore,
And ranged the wood in stacks by Balder's ship;
And every God went home to his own house.
But when the Gods were to the forest gone,
Hermod led Sleipner from Valhalla forth
And saddled him; before that, Sleipner brooked
No meaner hand than Odin's on his mane,
On his broad back no lesser rider bore;
Yet docile now he stood at Hermod's side,
Arching his neck, and glad to be bestrode,
Knowing the God they went to seek, how dear.
But Hermod mounted him, and sadly fared
In silence up the dark untravelled road
Which branches from the north of Heaven, and went.

All day; and daylight waned, and night came on.
And all that night he rode, and journeyed so,
Nine days, nine nights, toward the northern ice,
Through valleys deep-engulphed, by roaring streams;
And on the tenth morn he beheld the bridge
Which spans with golden arches Giall's stream,
And on the bridge a damsel watching armed,
In the strait passage, at the further end,
Where the road issues between walling rocks.
Scant space that warder left for passers by;—
But as when cowherds in October drive
Their kine across a snowy mountain pass
To winter pasture on the southern side,
And on the ridge a waggon chokes the way
Wedged in the snow; then painfully the hinds
With goad and shouting urge their cattle past,
Plunging through deep untrodden banks of snow
To right and left, and warm steam fills the air—
So on the bridge that damsel blocked the way,
nd questioned Hermod as he came, and said:—
"Who art thou on thy black and fiery horse
Under whose hoofs the bridge o'er Giall's stream
Rumbles and shakes? Tell me thy race and home!
But yestermorn five troops of dead passed by
Bound on their way below to Hela's realm,
Nor shook the bridge so much as thou alone.
And thou hast flesh and colour on thy cheeks,
Like men who live, and draw the vital air;
Nor look'st thou pale and wan, like men deceased,
Souls bound below, my daily passers here."
And the fleet-footed Hermod answered her:—
"O damsel, Hermod am I called, the son
Of Odin; and my high-roofed house is built
Far hence, in Asgard, in the city of Gods;
And Sleipner, Odin's horse, is this I ride.
And I come, sent this road on Balder's track;
Say then, if he hath crossed thy bridge or no?"
He spake; the warder of the bridge replied:—

"O Hermod, rarely do the feet of Gods
Or of the horses of the Gods resound
Upon my bridge; and, when they cross, I kno
Balder hath gone this way, and ta'en the road
Below there, to the north, toward Hela's realm.
From here the cold white mist can be discerned
Not lit with sun, but through the darksome air
By the dim vapour-blotted light of stars,
Which hangs over the ice where lies the road.
For in that ice are lost those northern streams

There are the joyless seats, the haunt of ghosts,

But northward Hermod rode, the way below.
And o'er a darksome tract, which knows no sun
But by the blotted light of stars, he fared;
And he came down to Ocean's northern strand
At the drear ice, beyond the giants' home.
Thence on he journey'd o'er the fields of ice

And as the swallows crowd the bulrush beds
Of some clear river, issuing from a lake,
On autumn days, before they cross the sea ;
And to each bulrush-crest a swallow hangs
Swinging, and others skim the river streams,
And their quick twittering fills the banks and shores—
So around Hermod swarmed the twittering ghosts.
Women, and infants, and young men who died
Too soon for fame, with white ungraven shields ;
And old men, known to Glory, but their star
Betrayed them, and of wasting age they died,
Not wounds ; yet dying they their armour wore,
And now have chief regard in Hela's realm.
Behind flocked wrangling up a piteous crew,
Greeted of none, disfeatured and forlorn—
Cowards, who were in sloughs interred alive ;
And round them still the wattled hurdles hung
Wherewith they stamped them down, and trod them deep,
To hide their shameful memory from men.
But all he passed unhailed, and reached the throne
Of Hela, and saw, near it, Balder crowned,
And Hela set thereon [illegible]h countenance stern ;
And thus bespake h[illegible] e solemn que[illegible]—

For Balder, whom thou hold'st by right below!
Restore him, for what part fulfils he here?
Shall he shed cheer over the cheerless seats,
And touch the apathetic ghosts with joy?—
Not for such end, O queen, thou hold'st thy realm!
For Heaven was Balder born, the city of Gods
And Heroes, where they live in light and joy.
Thither restore him, for his place is there!"
  He spoke; and grave replied the solemn queen:—
"Hermod, for he thou art, thou son of Heaven!
A strange unlikely errand, sure, is thine.
Do the Gods send to me to make them blest?
Small bliss my race hath of the Gods obtained.
Three mighty children to my father Lok
Did Angerbode, the giantess, bring forth—
Fenris the wolf, the serpent huge, and me.
Of these the serpent in the sea ye cast,
Who since in your despite hath waxed amain,
And now with gleaming ring enfolds the world;
Me on this cheerless nether world ye threw
And gave me nine unlighted realms to rule;
While on his island in the lake afar,
Made fast to the bored crag, by wile not strength
Subdued, with limber chains lives Fenris bound.
Lok still subsists in Heaven, our father wise,
Your mate, though loathed, and feasts in Odin's hall;
But him too foes await, and netted snares,
And in a cave a bed of needle rocks,
And o'er his visage serpents dropping gall.
Yet he shall one day rise, and burst his bonds,
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
We do not as some feebler haters do,
Seek to afflict our foes with petty pangs,
Helpless to better us, or ruin them.

Come then! if Balder was so dear beloved,
And this is true, and such a loss is Heaven's—
Hear, how to Heaven may Balder be restored.
Show me through all the world the signs of grief!
Fails but one thing to grieve, here Balder stops!
Let all that lives and moves upon the earth
Weep him, and all that is without life weep!
Let Gods, men, brutes, beweep him; plants and stones!
So shall I know the lost was dear indeed,
And bend my heart, and give him back to Heaven."
  She spake; and Hermod answered her, and said:—
"Hela, such as thou say'st, the terms shall be.
But come, declare me this, and truly tell!
May I, ere I depart, bid Balder hail?
Or is it here withheld to greet the dead?"
  He spake; and straightway Hela answered him:—
"Hermod, greet Balder if thou wilt, and hold
Converse! his speech remains, though he be dead."
  And straight to Balder Hermod turned, and spake:—
"Even in the abode of death, O Balder, hail!
Thou hear'st, if hearing, like as speech, is thine,
The terms of thy releasement hence to Heaven.
Fear nothing but that all shall be fulfilled!
For not unmindful of thee are the Gods
Who see the light, and blest in Asgard dwell;
Even here they seek thee out, in Hela's realm.
And sure of all the happiest far art thou
Who ever have been known in earth or Heaven!
Alive, thou wert of Gods the most beloved;
And now thou sittest crowned by Hela's side
Here, and hast honour among all the dead."
  He spake; and Balder uttered him reply,
But feebly, as a voice far off; he said:—
  "Hermod the nimble, gild me not my death!
Better to live a serf, a captured man,
Who scatters rushes in a master's hall,
Than be a crowned king here, and rule the dead.
And now I count not of these terms as safe

To be fulfilled, nor my return as sure,
Though I be loved, and many mourn my death ;
For [illegible] minded ever was the seed
[illegible]
[illegible]
To Odin, to my father, take this ring,
Memorial of me, whether saved or no ;

He spake, and raised his hand, and gave the rin
And with inscrutable regard the queen
Of Hell beheld them, and the ghosts stood dumb
But Hermod took the ring, and yet once more

He

And to the wall he came, and found the grate
Lifted, and issued on the fields of ice ;
And o'er the ice he fared to Ocean's strand,
And up from thence, a wet and misty road,
[illegible] stream.

Nine days he took to go, two to return ;
And on the twelfth morn saw the light of Heaven.

th,

Vineyards, and crofts, and pastures, bright with st
So Hermod, o'er the fog between, saw Heaven.
And Sleipner snorted, for he smelt the air
Of Heaven , and mightily, as winged, he flew.
And Hermod [illegible]
And he drew
In Asgard ;

Then Hermod knew what labour held the Gods;
And through the empty streets he rode, and passed
Under the gate-house to the sands, and found
The Gods on the seashore by Balder's ship.

3. FUNERAL

THE Gods held talk together, grouped in knots,
Round Balder's corpse, which they had thither borne;
And Hermod came down towards them from the gate.
And Lok, the father of the serpent, first
Beheld him come, and to his neighbour spake:—
" See, here is Hermod, who comes single back
From Hell; and shall I tell thee how he seems?
Like as a farmer, who hath lost his dog,
Some morn, at market, in a crowded town—
Through many streets the poor beast runs in vain,
And follows this man after that, for hours;
And, late at evening, spent and panting, falls
Before a stranger's threshold, not his home,
With flanks a-tremble, and his slender tongue
Hangs quivering out between his dust-smeared jaws,
And piteously he eyes the passers by;
But home his master comes to his own farm,
Far in the country, wondering where he is—
So Hermod comes to-day unfollowed home."
And straight his neighbour, moved with wrath, replied:—
" Deceiver! fair in form, but false in heart!
Enemy, mocker, whom, though Gods, we hate—
Peace! lest our father Odin hear thee gibe.
Would I might see him snatch thee in his hand,
And bind thy carcase, like a bale, with cords,
And hurl thee in a lake, to sink or swim!
If clear from plotting Balder's death, to swim;
But deep, if thou devisedst it, to drown,
And perish, against fate, before thy day!"

So they two soft to one another spake.
But Odin looked toward the land, and saw
His messenger; and he stood forth, and cried.

Of ghosts, and communed with their solemn queen,
And to your prayer she sends you this reply:
Show her through all the world the signs of grief!
Fails but one thing to grieve, there Balder stops!
Let Gods, men, brutes, beweep him, plants and stones!
So shall she know your loss was dear indeed,
And bend her heart, and give you Balder back."

But now, put on your arms, and mount your steeds,
And in procession all come near, and weep
Balder; for that is what the dead desire
When ye enough have wept, then build a pile
Of the heaped wood, and burn his corpse with fire
Out of our sight; that we may turn from grief,
And lead, as erst, our daily life in Heaven!"
He spoke, and the Gods armed; and Odin donned
His dazzling corslet and his helm of gold,
And led the way on Sleipner, and the rest
Followed, in tears, their father and their king.

Farewell, O Balder, bright and loved, my son!

In that great day, the twilight of the Gods,
When Muspel's children shall beleaguer Heaven,
Then we shall miss thy counsel and thy arm."
  Thou camest near the next, O warrior Thor!
Shouldering thy hammer, in thy chariot drawn,
Swaying the long-haired goats with silvered rein;
And over Balder's corpse these words didst say:—
  "Brother! thou dwellest in the darksome land,
And talkest with the feeble tribes of ghosts,
Now, and I know not how they prize thee there—
But here, I know, thou wilt be missed and mourned.
For haughty spirits and high wraths are rife
Among the Gods and Heroes here in Heaven,
As among those whose joy and work is war;
And daily strifes arise, and angry words;
But from thy lips, O Balder! night or day,
Heard no one ever an injurious word
To God or Hero, but thou keptest back
The others, labouring to compose their brawls.
Be ye then kind, as Balder too was kind!
For we lose him, who smoothed all strife in Heaven.
  He spake, and all the Gods assenting wailed.
And Freya next came nigh, with golden tears;
The loveliest Goddess she in Heaven, by all
Most honoured after Frea, Odin's wife.
Her long ago the wandering Oder took
To mate, but left her to roam distant lands;
Since then she seeks him, and weeps tears of gold.
Names hath she many; Vanadis on earth
They call her, Freya is her name in Heaven—
She in her hands took Balder's head, and spake:-
  "Balder, my brother, thou art gone a road
Unknown and long, and haply on that way
My long-lost wandering Oder thou hast met,
For in the paths of Heaven he is not found!
Oh, if it be so, tell him what thou wert
To his neglected wife, and what he is,
And wring his heart with shame, to hear thy wo

For he, my husband, left me here to pine,
Not long a wife, when his unquiet heart
First drove him from me into distant lands;
Since then I vainly seek him through the world,
And weep from shore to shore my golden tears,
But neither god nor mortal heeds my pain.
Thou only, Balder! wert for ever kind,
To take my hand, and wipe my tears, and say:
Weep not, O Freya, weep no golden tears!
One day the wandering Oder will return,
Or thou wilt find him in thy faithful search
On some great road, or resting in an inn,
Or at a ford, or sleeping by a tree
So Balder said;—but Oder, well I know,
My truant Oder I shall see no more
To the world's end! and Balder now is gone;
And I am left uncomforted in Heaven "
 She spake; and all the Goddesses bewailed.
Last, from among the Heroes one came near,
No God, but of the hero-troop the chief—
Regner, who swept the northern sea with fleets,
And ruled o'er Denmark and the heathy isles,
Living—but Ella captured him and slew;
A king, whose fame then filled the vast of Heaven,
Now time obscures it, and men's later deeds—
the corpse, and spake, and said:—
t are many Scalds in Heaven
hief Scald, thy brother Brage,
to sing, though thou art gone.
, while we drink, we hear,
ne, in Odin's hall;
on one string, and wake
r soul of wars alone,
ed,
nt death.
dst strike
e minded us, and youth,

And wife, and children, and our ancient home.
Yes! and I, too, remembered then no more
My dungeon, where the serpents stung me dead,
Nor Ella's victory on the English coast—
But I heard Thora laugh in Gothland Isle,
And saw my shepherdess, Aslauga, tend
Her flock along the white Norwegian beach.
Tears started to mine eyes with yearning joy;
Therefore with grateful heart I mourn thee dead."
So Regner spake, and all the Heroes groaned.
But now the sun had passed the height of Heaven,
And soon had all that day been spent in wail;
But then the father of the ages said:—
"Ye Gods, there well may be too much of wail!
Bring now the gathered wood to Balder's ship;
Heap on the deck the logs, and build the pyre!"
But when the Gods and Heroes heard, they broug
The wood to Balder's ship, and built a pile,
Full the deck's breadth, and lofty; then the corpse
Of Balder on the highest top they laid,
With Nanna on his right, and on his left
Hoder, his brother, whom his own hand slew.
And they set jars of wine and oil to lean
Against the bodies, and stuck torches near,
Splinters of pine-wood, soaked with turpentine;
And brought his arms and gold, and all his stuff,
And slew the dogs who at his table fed,
And his horse, Balder's horse, whom most he lo
And threw them on the pyre, and Odin threw
A last choice gift thereon, his golden ring.
The mast they fixt, and hoisted up the sails,
Then they put fire to the wood; and Thor
Set his stout shoulder hard against the stern
To push the ship through the thick sand;—s
From the deep trench she ploughed, so stron
Furrowed it! and the water gurgled in.
And the ship floated on the waves, and rock
But in the hills a strong east wind arose,

And came d ... ls
Ran bl ...
The bre ...
And wr ... ship stood out to sea.
Soon with a roaring rose the mighty fire,
And the pile crackled ; and between the logs
Sharp quivering tongues of flame shot out, and lea
Curling and darting, higher, until they licked
The summit of the pile, the dead, the mast,
And ate the shrivelling sails , but still the ship
Drove on, ablaze above her hull with fire.
And the Gods stood upon the beach, and gazed ,
And, while they gazed, the sun went lurid down
Into the smoke-wrapt sea, and night came on.
Then the wind fell, with night, and there was caln
But through the dark they watched the burning sl
Still carried o'er the distant waters on
Farther and farther, like an eye of fire
So showed, in the far darkness, Balder's pile
But fainter, as the stars rose high, it flared ,
The bodies were consumed , ash choked the pile.
And as in a decaying winter fire
A charred log, falling, makes a shower of sparks—
So, with a shower of sparks, the pile fell in,
Reddening the sea around , and all was dark.
But the Gods went by starlight up the shore
To Asgard, and sate down in Odin's hall
At table, and the funeral feast began
All night they ate the boar Serimner's flesh,
And from their horns, with silver rimmed, drank n
Silent, and waited for the sacred morn.
And morning over all the world was spread
Then from their loathèd feast the Gods arose,
And took their horses, and set forth to ride
O'er the bridge Bifrost, where is Heimdall's watch,
To the ash Igdrasil, and Ida's plain ;
Thor came on foot, the rest on horseback rode.
And they found Mimir sitting by his fount

Of wisdom, which beneath the ash-tree springs;
And saw the Nornies watering the roots
Of that world-shadowing tree with honey-dew.
There came the Gods, and sate them down on stones;
And thus the father of the ages said:—
"Ye Gods, the terms ye know, which Hermod brought!
Accept them or reject them! both have grounds.
Accept them, and they bind us, unfulfilled,
To leave for ever Balder in the grave,
An unrecovered prisoner, shade with shades.
But how, ye say, should the fulfilment fail?—
Smooth sound the terms, and light to be fulfilled;
For dear-beloved was Balder while he lived
In Heaven and earth, and who would grudge him tears?
But from the traitorous seed of Lok they come,
These terms, and I suspect some hidden fraud.
Bethink ye, Gods, is there no other way?—
Speak, were not this a way, the way for Gods?
If I, if Odin, clad in radiant arms,
Mounted on Sleipner, with the warrior Thor
Drawn in his car beside me, and my sons,
All the strong brood of Heaven, to swell my train,
Should make irruption into Hela's realm,
And set the fields of gloom ablaze with light,
And bring in triumph Balder back to Heaven?"
He spake, and his fierce sons applauded loud.
But Frea, mother of the Gods, arose,
Daughter and wife of Odin; thus she said:—
"Odin, thou whirlwind, what a threat is this!
Thou threatenest what transcends thy might, even thine.
For of all powers the mightiest far art thou,
Lord over men on earth, and Gods in Heaven;
Yet even from thee thyself hath been withheld
One thing—to undo what thou thyself hast ruled.
For all which hath been fixt, was fixt by thee;
In the beginning, ere the Gods were born,
Before the Heavens were builded, thou didst slay

The giant Ymir, whom the abyss brought forth,
Thou and thy brethren fierce, the sons of Bor,

Then, walking by the sea, thou foundest spars
Of wood, and framed'st men, who till the earth,
Or on the sea, the field of pirates, sail;
And all the race of Ymir thou didst drown,
Save one, Bergelmer,—he on shipboard fled
Thy deluge, and from him the giants sprang;
But all that brood thou hast removed far off,

Me and my words, though thou be first in Heaven!
For I too am a Goddess, born of thee,
Thine eldest, and of me the Gods are sprung;
And all that is to come I know, but lock
In my own breast, and have to none revealed.
Come then! since Hela holds by right her prey,
But offers terms for his release to Heaven,
Accept the chance!—thou canst no more obtain.

She spake, and on her face let fall her veil,
And bowed her head, and sate with folded hands.
Nor did the all-ruling Odin slight her word;
Straightway he spake, and thus addressed the Gods:
"Go quickly forth through all the world, and pray
All living and unliving things to weep
Balder, if haply he may thus be won!"
When the Gods heard, they straight arose, and took
Their horses, and rode forth through all the world.
North, south, east, west, they struck, and roamed the
world,
Entreating all things to weep Balder's death.
And all that lived, and all without life, wept.
And as in winter, when the frost breaks up,
At winter's end, before the spring begins,
And a warm west wind blows, and thaw sets in—
After an hour a dripping sound is heard
In all the forests, and the soft-strewn snow
Under the trees is dibbled thick with holes,
And from the boughs the snowloads shuffle down;
And, in fields sloping to the south, dark plots
Of grass peep out amid surrounding snow,
And widen, and the peasant's heart is glad—
So through the world was heard a dripping noise
Of all things weeping to bring Balder back;
And there fell joy upon the Gods to hear.
But Hermod rode with Niord, whom he took
To show him spits and beaches of the sea
Far off, where some unwarned might fail to we
Niord, the God of storms, whom fishers know
Not born in Heaven—he was in Vanheim rear
With men, but lives a hostage with the Gods
He knows each frith, and every rocky creek
Fringed with dark pines, and sand who
scream;—
They two scoured every coast, and all thing
And they rode home together, through the
Of Jarnvid, which to east of Midgard lies

Bordering the giants, where the trees are iron;
There in the wood before a cave they came

Look, as in some boor's yard a sweet-breathed cow,
h hay,

So ye grow squeamish, Gods, and sniff at Heaven!"
She spake; but Hermod answered her and said:—
"Thok, not for gibes we come, we come for tears.
Balder is dead, and Hela holds her prey

But, with a louder laugh, the hag replied:—
"Is Balder dead? and do ye come for tears?
Thok with dry eyes will weep o'er Balder's pyre
Weep him all other things, if weep they will—
I weep him not! let Hela keep her prey!"
She spake, and to the cavern's depth she fled,
Mocking; and Hermod knew their toil was vain
And as seafaring men, who long have wrought
In the great deep for gain, at last come home,
And towards evening see the headlands rise
Of their dear country, and can plain descry
A fire of withered furze which boys have lit
Upon the cliffs, or smoke of burning weeds
Out of a tilled field inland;—then the wind
d Catches them, and drives out again to sea.

So the Gods' cross was bitterer for their joy.

Then, sad at heart, to Niord Hermod spake :—
" It is the accuser Lok, who flouts us all.
Ride back, and tell in Heaven this heavy news !
I must again below, to Hela's realm."
He spoke ; and Niord set forth back to Heaven.
But northward Hermod rode, the way below,
The way he knew ; and traversed Giall's stream,
And down to Ocean groped, and crossed the ice,
And came beneath the wall, and found the grate
Still lifted ; well was his return foreknown !
And once more Hermod saw around him spread
The joyless plains, and heard the streams of Hell.
But as he entered, on the extremest bound
Of Niflheim, he saw one ghost come near,
Hovering, and stopping oft, as if afraid—
Hoder, the unhappy, whom his own hand slew.
And Hermod looked, and knew his brother's gho
And called him by his name, and sternly said :—
" Hoder, ill-fated, blind in heart and eyes !
Why tarriest thou to plunge thee in the gulph
Of the deep inner gloom, but flittest here,
In twilight, on the lonely verge of Hell,
Far from the other ghosts, and Hela's throne ?
Doubtless thou fearest to meet Balder's voice,
Thy brother, whom through folly thou didst s
He spoke ; but Hoder answered him, and s
" Hermod the nimble, dost thou still pursue
The unhappy with reproach, even in the gra
For this I died, and fled beneath the gloom,
Not daily to endure abhorring Gods,
Nor with a hateful presence cumber Heave
And canst thou not, even here, pass pityin
No less than Balder have I lost the light
Of Heaven, and communion with my kin
I too had once a wife, and once a child,
And substance, and a golden house in He
But all I left of my own act, and fled
Below, and dost thou hate me even here

Balder upbraids me not, nor hates at all,
Though he has cause, have any cause; but he,
When that with downcast looks I hither came,
Stretched forth his hand, and, with benignant voice,
Welcome, he said, *if there be welcome here,*
Brother and fellow-sport of Lok with me!
And not to offend thee, Hermod, nor to force
My hated converse on thee, came I up
From the deep gloom, where I will now return;
But earnestly I longed to hover near,
Not too far off, when that thou camest by;
To feel the presence of a brother God,
And hear the passage of a horse of Heaven,
For the last time—for here thou com'st no more."
He spake, and turned to go to the inner gloom.
But Hermod stayed him with mild words, and said:—
"Thou doest well to chide me, Hoder blind!
Truly thou say'st, the planning guilty mind
Was Lok's; the unwitting hand alone was thine.
But Gods are like the sons of men in this—
When they have woe, they blame the nearest cause.
Howbeit stay, and be appeased! and tell
Sits Balder still in pomp by Hela's side,
Or is he mingled with the unnumbered dead?"
And the blind Hoder answered him and spake:—
"His place of state remains by Hela's side,
But empty, for his wife, for Nanna came
Lately below, and joined him; and the pair
Frequent the still recesses of the realm
Of Hela, and hold converse undisturbed
But they too, doubtless, will have breathed the balm
Which floats before a visitant from Heaven,
And have drawn upward to this verge of Hell."
He spake; and, as he ceased, a puff of wind
Rolled heavily the leaden mist aside
Round where they stood, and they beheld two forms
Make towards them o'er the stretching cloudy plain.
And Hermod straight perceived them, who they were.

Balder and Nanna; and to Balder said :–
" Balder, too truly thou foresaw'st a sn
Lok triumphs still, and Hela keeps her pr
No more to Asgard shalt thou come, nor l
In thy own house, Breidablik, nor enjoy
The love all bear toward thee, nor train u
Forset, thy son, to be beloved like thee.
Here must thou lie, and wait an endless a
Therefore for the last time, O Balder, hail
He spake; and Balder answered him, a
" Hail and farewell, for here thou com'st
Yet mourn not for me, Hermod, when the
In Heaven, nor let the other Gods lament
As wholly to be pitied, quite forlorn!
For Nanna hath rejoined me, who, of old,
In Heaven, was seldom parted from my si
And still the acceptance follows me, whic
My former life, and cheers me even here.
The iron frown of Hela is relaxed
When I draw nigh, and the wan tribes of
Love me, and gladly bring for my award
Their ineffectual feuds and feeble hates—
Shadows of hates, but they distress them
And the fleet-footed Hermod made repl
" Thou hast then all the solace death allo
Esteem and function; and so far is well.
Yet here thou liest, Balder, underground,
Rusting for ever! and the years roll on,
The generations pass, the ages grow,
And bring us nearer to the final day
When from the south shall march the fier
And cross the bridge of Heaven, with Lok
And Fenris at his heel with broken chain
While from the east the giant Rymer stee
His ship, and the great serpent makes to
And all are marshalled in one flaming sou

He spake; but Balder answered him, and said:—
"Mourn not for me! Mourn, Hermod, for the Gods!
Mourn for the men on earth, the Gods in Heaven,
Who live, and with their eyes shall see that day!
The day will come, when Asgard's towers shall fall,
And Odin, and his sons, the seed of Heaven;
But what were I, to save them in that hour?
If strength might save them, could not Odin save,
My father, and his pride, the warrior Thor,
Vidar the silent, the impetuous Tyr?—
I, what were I, when these can nought avail?
Yet, doubtless, when the day of battle comes,
And the two hosts are marshalled, and in Heaven
The golden-crested cock shall sound alarm,
And his black brother-bird from hence reply,

To other Gods it were, is my enforced
Absence from fields where I could nothing aid;

ich make

Mine ears are stunned with blows, and sick for calm.

In new-recovered seats, the happier day."
He spake; and the fleet Hermod thus replied:—
"Brother, what seats are these, what happier day?
Tell me, that I may ponder it when gone."
And the ray-crowned Balder answered him:—

The second Asgard, with another name.
Thither, when o'er this present earth and Heave
The tempest of the latter days hath swept,
And they from sight have disappeared, and sunk
Shall a small remnant of the Gods repair;
Hoder and I shall join them from the grave.
There re-assembling we shall see emerge
From the bright Ocean at our feet an earth
More fresh, more verdant than the last, with fr
Self-springing, and a seed of man preserved,
Who then shall live in peace, as now in war.
But we in Heaven shall find again with joy
The ruined palaces of Odin, seats
Familiar, halls where we have supped of old;
Re-enter them with wonder, never fill
Our eyes with gazing, and rebuild with tears.
And we shall tread once more the well-known
Of Ida, and among the grass shall find
The golden dice with which we played of yor
And that will bring to mind the former life
And pastime of the Gods, the wise discourse
Of Odin, the delights of other days.
O Hermod, pray that thou may'st join us th
Such for the future is my hope; meanwhile
I rest the thrall of Hela, and endure
Death, and the gloom which round me even
Thickens, and to its inner gulph recalls.
Farewell, for longer speech is not allowed!
He spoke, and waved farewell, and gave
To Nanna; and she gave their brother bli
Her hand, in turn, for guidance; and the
Departed o'er the cloudy plain, and soon
Faded from sight into the interior gloom.
But Hermod stood beside his drooping ho
Mute, gazing after them in tears; and fai
Fain had he followed their receding steps,
Though they to death were bound, and he
Then; but a power he could not break w

And as a stork which idle boys have trapped,
And tied him in a yard, at autumn sees
Flocks of his kind pass flying o'er his head
To warmer lands, and coasts that keep the sun ;—
He strains to join their flight, and from his shed
Follows them with a long complaining cry—
So Hermod gazed, and yearned to join his kin.
At last he sighed, and set forth back to Heaven.

THE STRAYED REVELLER

THE PORTICO OF CIRCE'S PALACE. EVENING

A Youth. Circe

The Youth

FASTER, faster,
O Circe, Goddess,
Let the wild, thronging train,
The bright procession
Of eddying forms,
Sweep through my soul!

Thou standest, smiling
Down on me! thy right arm
Leaned up against the column there,
Props thy soft cheek;
Thy left holds, hanging loosely,
The deep cup, ivy-cinctured,
I held but now.

Is it then evening
So soon? I see, the night dews,
Clustered in thick beads, dim
The agate brooch-stones
On thy white shoulder;

The cool night-wind, too,
Blows through the portico,
Stirs thy hair, Goddess,
Waves thy white robe!

Circe

Whence art thou, sleeper?

The Youth

When the white dawn first
Through the rough fir-planks
Of my hut, by the chestnuts,
Up at the valley-head,
Came breaking, Goddess!
I sprang up, I threw round me
My dappled fawn-skin;
Passing out, from the wet turf,
Where they lay, by the hut door,
I snatched up my vine-crown, my fir-staff,
All drenched in dew;
Came swift down to join
The rout early gathered
In the town, round the temple,
Iacchus' white fane
On yonder hill.

Quick I passed, following
The wood-cutters' cart-track
Down the dark valley;—I saw
On my left, through the beeches,
Thy palace, Goddess,
Smokeless, empty!
Trembling, I entered; beheld
The court all silent,
The lions sleeping,
On the altar this bowl.
I drank, Goddess!

And sunk down here, sleeping,
On the steps of thy portico.

Circe

Foolish boy! Why tremblest thou?
Thou lovest it, then, my wine?
Wouldst more of it? See, how glows,
Through the delicate, flushed marble,
The red, creaming liquor,
Strown with dark seeds!
Drink, then! I chide thee not,
Deny thee not my bowl.
Come, stretch forth thy hand, then—so!
Drink—drink again!

The Youth

Thanks, gracious one!—
Ah, the sweet fumes again!
More soft, ah me,
More subtle-winding
Than Pan's flute-music!
Faint—faint! Ah me,
Again the sweet sleep!

Circe

Hist! Thou—within there!
Come forth, Ulysses!
Art tired with hunting?
While we range the woodland,
See what the day brings.

Ulysses

Ever new magic!
Hast thou then lured hither,

Or some youth beloved of Pan,
Of Pan and the Nymphs?
That he sits, bending downward
His white, delicate neck
To the ivy-wreathed marge
Of thy cup—the bright, glancing vine-leaves
That crown his hair,
Falling forward, mingling
With the dark ivy-plants;
His fawn-skin, half untied,
Smeared with red wine-stains? Who is he,
That he sits, overweighed
By fumes of wine and sleep,
So late, in thy portico?
What youth, Goddess,—what guest
Of Gods or mortals?

Circe

Hist! he wakes!
I lured him not hither, Ulysses.
Nay, ask him!

The Youth

Who speaks? Ah, who comes forth
To thy side, Goddess, from within?
How shall I name him?
This spare, dark-featured,
Quick-eyed stranger?
Ah, and I see too
His sailor's bonnet,
His short coat, travel-tarnished,
With one arm bare!—
Art thou not he, whom fame
This long time rumours
The favoured guest of Circe, brought by the w
Art thou he, stranger?
The wise Ulysses,
Laertes' son?

Ulysses

I am Ulysses.
And thou, too, sleeper?
Thy voice is sweet.
It may be thou hast followed
Through the islands some divine bard,
By age taught many things,
Age and the Muses;
And heard him delighting
The chiefs and people
In the banquet, and learned his songs,
Of Gods and Heroes,
Of war and arts,
And peopled cities
Inland, or built
By the grey sea —If so, then hail!
I honour and welcome thee.

The Youth

The Gods are happy.
They turn on all sides
Their shining eyes,
And see, below them,
The earth, and men.

They see Tiresias
Sitting, staff in hand,
On the warm, grassy
Asopus' bank,
His robe drawn over
His old, sightless head,
Revolving inly
The doom of Thebes.

They see the Centaurs
In the upper glens
Of Pelion, in the stream

Where red-berried ashes fringe
The clear-brown shallow pools;
With streaming flanks, and heads
Reared proudly, snuffing
The mountain wind.

They see the Indian
Drifting, knife in hand,
His frail boat moored to
A floating isle thick matted
With large-leaved, low-creeping melo
And the dark cucumber.
He reaps, and stows them,
Drifting—drifting;—round him,
Round his green harvest-plot,
Flow the cool lake-waves;
The mountains ring them.

They see the Scythian
On the wide stepp, unharnessing
His wheeled house at noon.
He tethers his beast down, and make
Mares' milk, and bread
Baked on the embers;—all around
The boundless waving grass-plains s
starred
With saffron and the yellow hollyhoc
And flag-leaved iris flowers.
Sitting in his cart
He makes his meal; before him, for l
Alive with bright green lizards,
And the springing bustard fowl,
The track, a straight black line,
Furrows the rich soil; here and there
Clusters of lonely mounds
Topped with rough-hewn,
Grey, rain-bleared statues, overpeer
The sunny waste.

They see the ferry
On the broad, clay-laden
Lone Chorasmian stream ;—thereon
With snort and strain,
Two horses, strongly swimming, tow
The ferry-boat, with woven ropes
To either bow
Firm-harnessed by the mane ; a chief,
With shout and shaken spear
Stands at the prow, and guides them ; but astern,
[illegible] obes,
[illegible]
[illegible]
Of gold and ivory,
Of turquoise-earth and amethyst,
Jasper and chalcedony,
And milk-barred onyx stones.
The loaded boat swings groaning
In the yellow eddies ,
The Gods behold them.

They see the Heroes
Sitting in the dark ship
On the foamless, long-heaving,
Violet sea ·
At sunset nearing
The Happy Islands.

These things, Ulysses,
The wise bards also
Behold and sing
But oh, what labour !
O prince, what pain !

They too can see
Tiresias ;—but the Gods,
Who gave them vision,
Added this law :

That they should bear too
His groping blindness,
His dark foreboding,
His scorned white hairs;
Bear Hera's anger
Through a life lengthened
To seven ages.

They see the Centaurs
On Pelion;—then they feel,
They too, the maddening wine
Swell their large veins to bursting; in wild pain
They feel the biting spears
Of the grim Lapithæ, and Theseus, drive,
Drive crashing through their bones, they feel
High on a jutting rock in the red stream
Alcmena's dreadful son
Ply his bow;—such a price
The Gods exact for song!
To become what we sing.

They see the Indian
On his mountain lake;—but squalls
Make their skiff reel, and worms
In the unkind spring have gnawed
Their melon-harvest to the heart; they see
The Scythian;—but long frosts
Parch them in winter-time on the bare stepp,
Till they too fade like grass; they crawl
Like shadows forth in spring.

They see the merchants
On the Oxus' stream;—but care
Must visit first them too, and make them pale.
Whether, through whirling sand,
A cloud of desert robber-horse have burst
Upon their caravan; or greedy kings,
In the walled cities the way passes through,

Crushed them with tolls; or fever-airs,
On some great river's marge,
Mown them down, far from home.

They see the Heroes
Near harbour;—but they share
Their lives, and former violent toil in Thebes,
Seven-gated Thebes, or Troy,
Or where the echoing oars
Of Argo first
Startled the unknown sea.

The old Silenus
Came, lolling in the sunshine,
From the dewy forest coverts,
This way, at noon;
Sitting by me, while his Fauns
Down at the water side
Sprinkled and smoothed
His drooping garland,
He told me these things.

But I, Ulysses,
Sitting on the warm steps,
Looking over the valley,
All day long, have seen,
Without pain, without labour,
Sometimes a wild-haired Mænad!
Sometimes a Faun with torches!
And sometimes, for a moment,
Passing through the dark stems
Flowing-robed—the beloved,
The desired, the divine,
Beloved Iacchus!

Ah, cool night-wind, tremulous stars!
Ah, glimmering water—
Fitful earth-murmur

Dreaming woods!
Ah, golden-haired, strangely smiling Goddess,
And thou, proved, much enduring,
Wave-tossed Wanderer!
Who can stand still?
Ye fade, ye swim, ye waver before me.
The cup again!

Faster, faster,
O Circe, Goddess,
Let the wild, thronging train,
The bright procession
Of eddying forms,
Sweep through my soul!

TRISTRAM AND ISEULT[4]

I

TRISTRAM

Tristram

Is she not come? The messenger was sure.
Prop me upon the pillows once again—
Raise me, my page! this cannot long endure.
Christ, what a night! how the sleet whips the pane
What lights will those out to the northward be?

The Page

The lanterns of the fishing-boats at sea.

Tristram

Soft—who is that, stands by the dying fire?

The Page

Iseult.

Tristram and Iseult

Tristram

Ah! not the Iseult I desire.

*   *   *   *   *

What Knight is this so weak and pale,
Though the locks are yet brown on his noble head,
Propt on pillows in his bed,
Gazing seaward for the light
Of some ship that fights the gale
On this wild December night?
Over the sick man's feet is spread
A dark green forest dress;
A gold harp leans against the bed,
Ruddy in the fire's light.
I know him by his harp of gold,
Famous in Arthur's court of old:
I know him by his forest dress
The peerless hunter, harper, knight—
Tristram of Lyoness.

What Lady is this, whose silk attire
Gleams so rich in the light of the fire?
The ringlets on her shoulders lying
In their flitting lustre vying
With the clasp of burnished gold
Which her heavy robe doth hold
Her looks are mild, her fingers slight
As the driven snow are white,
And her cheeks are sunk and pale.
(1) Is it that the bleak sea-gale
] atic sea

(2)

Gazing seawards many a league
From her lonely shore-built tower,
While the knights are at the wars ?
Or, perhaps, has her young heart
(3) Felt already some deeper smart,
Of those that in secret the heart-strings rive,
Leaving her sunk and pale, though fair ?
Who is this snowdrop by the sea ?—
I know her by her mildness rare,
Her snow-white hands, her golden hair ;
I know her by her rich silk dress,
And her fragile loveliness—
The sweetest Christian soul alive,
Iseult of Brittany.

Iseult of Brittany ?—but where
Is that other Iseult fair,
That proud, first Iseult, Cornwall's queen ?
She, whom Tristram's ship of yore
From Ireland to Cornwall bore,
To Tyntagel, to the side
Of King Marc, to be his bride ?
She who, as they voyaged, quaffed
With Tristram that spiced magic draught,
Which since then for ever rolls
Through their blood, and binds their souls,
Working love, but working teen ?—
There were two Iseults, who did sway
Each her hour of Tristram's day ;
But one possessed his waning time,
The other his resplendent prime.
Behold her here, the patient flower,
Who possessed his darker hour !
Iseult of the Snow-White Hand
Watches pale by Tristram's bed.
She is here who had his gloom,
Where art thou who hadst his bloom ?
One such kiss as those of yore

Might thy dying knight restore—
Does the love-draught work no more?
Art thou cold, or false, or dead,
Iseult of Ireland?

*   *   *   *   *

Loud howls the wind, sharp patters the rain,
And the knight sinks back on his pillows again.
He is weak with fever and pain,
And his spirit is not clear.
Hark! he mutters in his sleep,
As he wanders far from here,
Changes place and time of year,
And his closèd eye doth sweep
O'er some fair unwintry sea,
Not this fierce Atlantic deep,
As he mutters brokenly:—

Tristram

The calm sea shines, loose hang the vessel's sails—
[illegible] les,
[illegible]
[illegible] *lay,*
[illegible]
Tristram, I pray thee, of thy courtesy,
Reach me my golden cup that stands by thee,
And pledge me in it first for courtesy"—
Ha! dost thou start? are thy lips blanched like [illegible]
Child, 'tis no water this, 'tis poison'd wine!
Iseult! . . . .

*   *   *   *

Ah, sweet angels, let him dream!
Keep his eyelids! let him seem
Not this fever-wasted wight
Thinned and paled before his time,
But the brilliant youthful knight
In the glory of his prime,
Sitting in the gilded barge,

At thy side, thou lovely charge
Bending gaily o'er thy hand,
Iseult of Ireland!
And she too, that princess fair,
If her bloom be now less rare,
Let her have her youth again—
Let her be as she was then!
Let her have her proud dark eyes,
And her petulant quick replies,
Let her sweep her dazzling hand
With its gesture of command,
And shake back her raven hair
With the old imperious air.
As of old, so let her be,
That first Iseult, princess bright,
Chatting with her youthful knight
As he steers her o'er the sea,
Quitting at her father's will
The green isle where she was bred,
And her bower in Ireland,
For the surge-beat Cornish strand;
Where the prince whom she must wed
Dwells on loud Tyntagel's hill,
Fast beside the sounding sea.
And that golden cup her mother
Gave her, that her future lord,
Gave her, that King Marc and she,
Might drink it on their marriage-day,
And for ever love each other—
Let her, as she sits on board,
Ah, sweet saints, unwittingly,
See it shine, and take it up,
And to Tristram laughing say:
"Sir Tristram, of thy courtesy,
Pledge me in my golden cup!"
Let them drink it—let their hands
Tremble, and their cheeks be flame,
As they feel the fatal bands·

Once more round them, and the sea
Blue, and o'er its mirror kind
Let the breath of the May wind,
Wandering through their drooping sails,
Die on the green fields of Wales.
Let a dream like this restore
What his eye must see no more.

Tristram

Chill blows the wind, the pleasaunce walks are drear.
Madcap, what jest was this, to meet me here?
Were feet like those made for so wild a way?
The southern winter-parlour, by my fay,
Had been the likeliest trysting place to-day!—
"*Tristram!—nay, nay—thou must not take my hand!—*
Tristram!—sweet love!—we are betrayed—out-planned.
Fly—save thyself—save me!—I dare not stay"—
One last kiss first!—"*'Tis vain—to horse—away!*"

* * * * *

Ah, sweet saints, his dream doth move
Faster surely than it should,
From the fever in his blood!
All the spring-time of his love
Is already gone and past,
And instead thereof is seen

g queen,
The flying leaves, the straining blast,
And that long, wild kiss—their last.
And this rough December night

Till they rule it, till he seem
The pressed fugitive again,
The love-desperate banished knight
With a fire in his brain
Flying o'er the stormy main.—
Whither does he wander now?
Haply in his dreams the wind
Wafts him here, and lets him find
The lovely orphan child again
In her castle by the coast;
The youngest, fairest chatelaine,
That this realm of France can boast,
Our snowdrop by the Atlantic sea,
Iseult of Brittany.
And—for through the haggard air,
The stained arms, the matted hair
Of that stranger knight ill-starred,
There gleamed something, which recalled
The Tristram who in better days
Was Launcelot's guest at Joyous Gard—
Welcomed here, and here installed,
Tended of his fever here,
Haply he seems again to move
His young guardian's heart with love;
In his exiled loneliness,
In his stately deep distress,
Without a word, without a tear.—
Ah, 'tis well he should retrace
His tranquil life in this lone place!
His gentle bearing at the side
Of his timid, youthful bride;
His long rambles by the shore
On winter evenings, when the roar
Of the near waves came, sadly grand,
Through the dark, up the drowned sand;
Or his endless reveries
In the woods, where the gleams play
On the grass under the trees,

Passing the long summer's day
Idle as a mossy stone
In the forest depths alone,

. . .

Hither let him wander now!
Hither, to the quiet hours
Passed among these heaths of ours
By the grey Atlantic sea!
Hours, if not of ecstasy,
From violent anguish surely free.

Tristram

All red with blood the whirling river flows,

" Up, Tristram, up," men cry, " thou moonstru
knight!
What foul fiend rides thee? On into the fight!"—
Above the din her voice is in my ears—
I see her form glide through the crossing spears—
Iseult! . . .

* * * *

Ah, he wanders forth again!
We cannot keep him; now as the
There's a secret in his breast
That will never let him rest.

. . .

The famous towns of Italy,
And label with the blessed sign
The heathen Saxons on the Rhine.
At Arthur's side he fights once mo

With the Roman Emperor.
There's many a gay knight where he goes
Will help him to forget his care.
The march, the leaguer, Heaven's blithe air,
The neighing steeds, the ringing blows—
Sick pining comes not where these are.—
Ah! what boots it, that the jest
Lightens every other brow,
What, that every other breast
Dances as the trumpets blow,
If one's own heart beats not light
On the waves of the tossed fight,
If oneself cannot get free
From the clog of misery?—
Thy lovely youthful wife grows pale
Watching by the salt sea tide
With her children at her side
For the gleam of thy white sail.
Home, Tristram, to thy halls again!
To our lonely sea complain,
To our forests tell thy pain!

Tristram

All round the forest sweeps off, black in shade,
But it is moonlight in the open glade;
And in the bottom of the glade shine clear
The forest-chapel and the fountain near.—
I think, I have a fever in my blood;
Come, let me leave the shadow of this wood,
Ride down, and bathe my hot brow in the flood.-
Mild shines the cold spring in the moon's clear li
God! 'tis *her* face plays in the waters bright.—
"Fair love," she says, "canst thou forget so soo
At this soft hour, under this sweet moon?"—
Iseult! . . . .

* * * *

Ah, poor soul, if this be so,
Only death can balm thy woe!

The solitudes of the green wood
Had no medicine for thy mood;
The rushing battle cleared thy blood
As little as did solitude.—
Ah, his eyelids slowly break
Their hot seals, and let him wake!
What new change shall we now see?
A happier? Worse it cannot be.

Tristram

Is my page here? Come, turn me to the fire!
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
Far hence; her dreams are fair—smooth is her brow!
Of me she recks not, nor my vain desire.—
I have had dreams, I have had dreams, my page,
Would take a score years from a strong man's age;
And with a blood like mine, will leave, I fear,
Scant leisure for a second messenger.—
My princess, art thou there? Sweet, 'tis too late!
To bed, and sleep! my fever is gone by.
To-night my page shall keep me company.
Where do the children sleep? kiss them for me!
Poor child, thou art almost as pale as I,
This comes of nursing long and watching late.
To bed—good night!

* * * *

She left the gleam-lit fire-place,
She came to the bed-side;
She took his hands in hers—her tears
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
A look as if the heart complained—
Her look was like a sad embrace!
The gaze of one who can divine

A grief and sympathize.
Sweet flower! thy children's eyes
Are not more innocent than thine.

But they sleep in sheltered rest,
Like helpless birds in the warm nest,
On the castle's southern side;
Where feebly comes the mournful roar
Of buffeting wind and surging tide
Through many a room and corridor.
Full on their window the moon's ray
Makes their chamber as bright as day;
It shines upon the blank white walls,
And on the snowy pillow falls,
And on two angel-heads doth play
Turned to each other—the eyes closed,
The lashes on the cheeks reposed.
Round each sweet brow the cap close-set
Hardly lets peep the golden hair;
Through the soft-opened lips the air
Scarcely moves the coverlet.
One little wandering arm is thrown
At random on the counterpane,
And often the fingers close in haste
As if their baby owner chased
The butterflies again.
This stir they have and this alone;
But else they are so still!—
Ah, tired madcaps! you lie still;
But were you at the window now
To look forth on the fairy sight
Of your illumined haunts by night,
To see the park-glades where you play
Far lovelier than they are by day,
To see the sparkle on the eaves,
And upon every giant bough
Of those old oaks, whose wet red leaves
Are jewelled with bright drops of rain—

The bare heaths spreading, clear as day,
Moor behind moor, far, far away,
Into the heart of Brittany.
And here and there, locked by the land,
Long inlets of smooth glittering sea,
And many a stretch of watery sand
All shining in the white moon-beams—
But you see fairer in your dreams!

What voices are these on the clear night air?
What lights in the court? what steps on the stair?

II

Iseult of Ireland

Tristram

Raise the light, my page! that I may see her.—
  Thou art come at last then, haughty Queen!
Long I've waited, long I've fought my fever,
  Late thou comest, cruel thou hast been.

Iseult

Blame me not, poor sufferer! that I tarried,
  Bound I was, I could not break the band
Chide not with the past, but feel the present!
  I am here—we meet—I hold thy hand.

Tristram

Thou art come, indeed—thou hast rejoined me;
  Thou hast dared it—but too late to save.
Fear not now that men should tax thy honour!
  I am dying; build—(thou may'st)—my grave!

Iseult

Tristram, ah, for love of Heaven, speak kindly!
What, I hear these bitter words from thee?
Sick with grief I am, and faint with travel—
Take my hand—dear Tristram, look on me!

Tristram

I forgot, thou comest from thy voyage.
Yes, the spray is on thy cloak and hair.
But thy dark eyes are not dimmed, proud Iseult!
And thy beauty never was more fair.

Iseult

Ah, harsh flatterer! let alone my beauty:
I, like thee, have left my youth afar.
ake my hand, and touch these wasted fingers—
See my cheek and lips, how white they are!

Tristram

hou art paler—but thy sweet charm, Iseult!
Would not fade with the dull years away.
h, how fair thou standest in the moonlight!
I forgive thee, Iseult!—thou wilt stay?

Iseult

ear me not, I will be always with thee;
I will watch thee, tend thee, soothe thy pain;
ing the tales of true long-parted lovers
Joined at evening of their days again.

Tristram

o, thou shalt not speak! I should be finding
Something altered in thy courtly tone.
it—sit by me! I will think, we've lived so
In the greenwood, all our lives, alone.

Iseult

Altered, Tristram? Not in courts, believe me,
  Love like mine is altered in the breast!
Courtly life is light and cannot reach it—
  Ah! it lives, because so deep suppressed.

Royal state with Marc, my deep-wronged husband—
  That was bliss to make my sorrows flee!
Silken courtiers whispering honied nothings—
  Those were friends to make me false to thee!

What, thou think'st men speak in courtly chambers
  Words by which the wretched are consoled?
What, thou think'st, this aching brow was cooler,
  Circled, Tristram, by a band of gold?

Ah, on which, if both our lots were balanced,
  W[illegible] n thrown—
[illegible]
  [illegible] hrone?

Vain and strange debate, where both have suffered,
  Both have passed a youth constrained and sad,
Both have brought their anxious day to evening,
  And have now short space for being glad!

Joined we are henceforth! nor will thy people,
  Nor thy younger Iseult take it ill,
That a former rival shares her office,
  When she sees her humbled, pale, and still.

I, a faded watcher by thy pillow,
  I, a statue on thy chapel floor,
Poured in grief before the Virgin Mother,
  Rouse no anger, make no rivals more.

She will cry: "Is this the foe I dreaded?
  This his idol? this that royal bride?

Ah, an hour of health would purge his eyesight !
  Stay, pale queen ! for ever by my side."

Hush, no words ! that smile, I see, forgives me.
  I am now thy nurse, I bid thee sleep.
Close thine eyes—this flooding moonlight blinds then
  Nay, all's well again ! thou must not weep.

Tristram

I am happy ! yet I feel, there's something
  Swells my heart, and takes my breath away.
Through a mist I see thee ; near !—come nearer !
  Bend !—bend down !—I yet have much to say.

Iseult

Ieaven ! his head sinks back upon the pillow !—
  Tristram ! Tristram ! let thy heart not fail.
all on God and on the holy angels !
  What, love, courage !—Christ ! he is so pale.

Tristram

Iush, 'tis vain, I feel my end approaching !
  This is what my mother said should be,
Vhen the fierce pains took her in the forest,
  The deep draughts of death, in bearing me.

' Son," she said, " thy name shall be of sorrow !
  Tristram art thou called for my death's sake ! "
io she said, and died in the drear forest—
  Grief since then his home with me doth make.

. am dying—Start not, nor look wildly !
  Me, thy living friend, thou canst not save.
But, since living we were ununited,
  Go not far, O Iseult ! from my grave.

Rise, go hence, and seek the princess Iseult !
  Speak her fair, she is of royal blood.

Say, I charged her, that thou stay beside me—
She will grant it ; she is kind and good.

Now to sail the seas of death I leave thee—
One last kiss upon the living shore !

Iseult

Tristram !—Tristram !—stay—receive me with thee !
Iseult leaves thee, Tristram ! never more.

*　　*　　*　　*　　*

You see them clear—the moon shines bright.
Slow, slow and softly, where she stood,
She sinks upon the ground , her hood
Had fallen back—her arms outspread
Still hold her lover's hands—her head
Is bowed, half-buried, on the bed.
O'er the blanched sheet her raven hair
Lies in disordered streams ; and there,
Strung like white stars, the pearls still are,
And the golden bracelets heavy and rare
Flash on her white arms still.

But then they decked a restless ghost
With hot-flushed cheeks and brilliant eyes,
And quivering lips on which the tide
Of courtly speech abruptly died,
And a glance that over the crowded floor,
The dancers, and the festive host,
Flew ever to the door.

And now to-night she laughs and speaks
And has a colour in her cheeks.
Christ keep us from such fantasy!"—

Yes! now the longing is o'erpast,
Which, dogged by fear and fought by shame,
Shook her weak bosom day and night,
Consumed her beauty like a flame,
And dimmed her like the desert blast.
And though the curtains hide her face,
Yet were it lifted to the light,
The sweet expression of her brow
Would charm the gazer, till his thought
Erased the ravages of time,
Filled up the hollow cheek, and brought
A freshness back as of her prime—
So healing is her quiet now!
So perfectly the lines express
A tranquil, settled loveliness,
Her younger rival's calmest grace.

The air of the December night
Steals coldly around the chamber bright,
Where those lifeless lovers be.
Swinging with it, in the light
Flaps the ghostlike tapestry.
And on the arras wrought you see
A stately Huntsman, clad in green,
And round him a fresh forest scene.
On that clear forest knoll he stays
With his pack round him, and delays;
He stares and stares, with troubled face,
At this huge, gleam-lit fireplace,
At that bright, iron-figured door,
And those blown rushes on the floor.
He gazes down into the room
With heated cheeks and flurried air,
And to himself he seems to say:

" What place is this, and who are they?
Who is that kneeling Lady fair?
And on his pillows that pale Knight
Who seems of marble on a tomb?
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
The sunken reefs, and far away
The unquiet bright Atlantic plain?—
What, has some glamour made me sleep,
[illegible]
[illegible]
Through some old, sea-side, knightly hall,
Not in the free greenwood at all?
That Knight's asleep, and at her prayer
That Lady by the bed doth kneel—
Then hush, thou boisterous bugle peal!"
The wild boar rustles in his lair,
The fierce hounds snuff the tainted air;
But lord and hounds keep rooted there.

Cheer, cheer thy dogs into the brake,
O Hunter! and without a fear
Thy golden-tasselled bugle blow,
And through the glades thy pastime take!
For thou wilt rouse no sleepers here.
For these thou seest are unmoved,
Cold, cold as those who lived and loved
A thousand years ago.

III

Iseult of Brittany

A year had flown, and o'er the sea away,
In Cornwall, Tristram and queen Iseult lay;

In King Marc's chapel, in Tyntagel old—
There in a ship they bore those lovers cold.

The young surviving Iseult, one bright day,
Had wandered forth; her children were at play
In a green circular hollow in the heath
Which borders the sea-shore; a country path
Creeps over it from the tilled fields behind.
The hollow's grassy banks are soft inclined,
And to one standing on them, far and near
The lone unbroken view spreads bright and clear
Over the waste.—This cirque of open ground
Is light and green; the heather, which all round
Creeps thickly, grows not here; but the pale grass
Is strewn with rocks, and many a shivered mass,
Of veined white-gleaming quartz, and here and ther
Dotted with holly trees and juniper.
In the smooth centre of the opening stood
Three hollies side by side, and made a screen
Warm with the winter sun, of burnished green,
With scarlet berries gemmed, the fell-fare's food.
Under the glittering hollies Iseult stands
Watching her children play; their little hands
Are busy gathering spars of quartz, and streams
Of stagshorn for their hats; anon, with screams
Of mad delight they drop their spoils, and bound
Among the holly clumps and broken ground,
Racing full speed, and startling in their rush
The fell-fares and the speckled missel-thrush
Out of their glossy coverts;—but when now
Their cheeks were flushed, and over each hot bro
Under the feathered hats of the sweet pair
In blinding masses showered the golden hair—
Then Iseult called them to her, and the three
Clustered under the holly screen, and she
Told them an old-world Breton history.

Warm in their mantles wrapt, the three stood tl

Under the hollies, in the clear still air—
[illegible]
But still, as they pursued their warm dry road,
From Iseult's lips the unbroken story flowed,
And still the children listened, their blue eyes
Fixed on their mother's face in wide surprise;
Nor did their looks stray once to the sea-side,
Nor to the brown heaths round them, bright and wide,
[illegible]
Bore up from where the bright Atlantic gleams,
Swooping to landward, nor to where, quite clear,
The fell-fares settled on the thickets near.
And they would still have listened, till dark night
Came keen and chill down on the heather bright;
But, when the red glow on the sea grew cold,
And the grey turrets of the castle old
Looked sternly through the frosty evening air,
Then Iseult took by the hand those children fair,
And brought her tale to an end, and found the path,
And led them home over the darkening heath.

And is she happy? Does she see unmoved
[illegible] and loved
[illegible]
Joy has not found her yet, nor ever will—
Is it this thought that makes her mien so still,
Her features so fatigued, her eyes, though sweet,
So sunk, so rarely lifted save to meet
Her children's? She moves slow; her voice alone
Hath yet an infantine and silver tone,
But even that comes languidly; in truth,
She seems one dying in a mask of youth.

And now she will go home, and softly lay
Her laughing children in their beds, and play
Awhile with them before they sleep; and then
She'll light her silver lamp, which fishermen
Dragging their nets through the rough waves, afar,
Along this iron coast, know like a star,
And take her broidery frame, and there she'll sit
Hour after hour, her gold curls sweeping it;
Lifting her soft-bent head only to mind
Her children, or to listen to the wind.
And when the clock peals midnight, she will move
Her work away, and let her fingers rove
Across the shaggy brows of Tristram's hound
Who lies, guarding her feet, along the ground;
Or else she will fall musing, her blue eyes
Fixed, her slight hands clasped on her lap; th
rise,
And at her prie-dieu kneel, until she have told
Her rosary beads of ebony tipped with gold,
Then to her soft sleep—and to-morrow 'll be
To-day's exact repeated effigy.

Yes, it is lonely for her in her hall!
The children, and the grey-haired seneschal,
Her women, and Sir Tristram's aged hound,
Are there the sole companions to be found.
But these she loves; and noisier life than this
She would find ill to bear, weak as she is;
She has her children, too, and night and day
Is with them; and the wide heaths where they r
The hollies, and the cliff, and the sea-shore,
The sand, the sea-birds, and the distant sails,
These are to her dear as to them; the tales
With which this day the children she beguiled
She gleaned from Breton grandames when a chi
In every hut along this sea-coast wild;
She herself loves them still, and, when they are
Can forget all to hear them, as of old.

Dear saints, it is not sorrow, as I hear,
Not suffering, that shuts up eye and ear
To all which has delighted them before,
And lets us be what we were once no more!
No! we may suffer deeply, yet retain
Power to be moved and soothed, for all our pain,
By what of old pleased us, and will again.
No! 'tis the gradual furnace of the world,
In whose hot air our spirits are upcurled
Until they crumble, or else grow like steel—
Which kills in us the bloom, the youth, the spring—
Which leaves the fierce necessity to feel,
But takes away the power—this can avail,
By drying up our joy in everything,
To make our former pleasures all seem stale
This, or some tyrannous single thought, some fit
Of passion, which subdues our souls to it,
Till for its sake alone we live and move—
Call it ambition, or remorse, or love—
This too can change us wholly, and make seem
All that we did before, shadow and dream.

And yet, I swear, it angers me to see
How this fool passion gulls men potently!
Being, in truth, but a diseased unrest,
And an unnatural overheat at best.

Who made a name at younger years than he;
Or that renowned mirror of chivalry,
Prince Alexander, Philip's peerless son,
Who carried the great war from Macedon

nto the Soudan's realm, and thundered on
Co die at thirty-five in Babylon.

What tale did Iseult to the children say,
Under the hollies, that bright winter's day?

She told them of the fairy-haunted land
Away the other side of Brittany,
Beyond the heaths, edged by the lonely sea;
Of the deep forest-glades of Broce-liande,
Through whose green boughs the golden sunshine creeps,
Where Merlin by the enchanted thorn-tree sleeps.
For here he came with the fay Vivian,
One April, when the warm days first began;
He was on foot, and that false fay, his friend,
On her white palfrey; here he met his end,
In these lone sylvan glades, that April day.
This tale of Merlin and the lovely fay
Was the one Iseult chose, and she brought clear
Before the children's fancy him and her.

Blowing between the stems, the forest air
Had loosened the brown curls of Vivian's hair,
Which played on her flushed cheek, and her blue eyes
Sparkled with mocking glee and exercise.
Her palfrey's flanks were mired and bathed in sweat,
For they had travelled far and not stopped yet.
A briar in that tangled wilderness
Had scored her white right hand, which she allows
To rest ungloved on her green riding-dress;
The other warded off the drooping boughs.
But still she chatted on, with her blue eyes
Fixed full on Merlin's face, her stately prize;
Her 'haviour had the morning's fresh clear grace,
The spirit of the woods was in her face;
She looked so witching fair, that learnèd wight
Forgot his craft, and his best wits took flight,

And he grew fond, and eager to obey
His mistress, use her empire as she may.

They came to where the brushwood ceased, and day

iorns,
Through the green fern, of the shy fallow-deer
Which come at noon down to the water here
You saw the bright-eyed squirrels dart along
Under the thorns on the green sward ; and strong
The blackbird whistled from the dingles near,
And the weird chipping of the woodpecker
Rang lonelily and sharp , the sky was fair,

Upon the brow-top grew a thorn, and here
The grass was dry and mossed, and you saw clear
Across the hollow , white anemones
Starred the cool turf, and clumps of primroses
Ran out from the dark underwood behind.
No fairer resting-place a man could find.
" Here let us halt," said Merlin then , and she
Nodded, and tied her palfrey to a tree.

leep
ep.

And from her brown-locked head the wimple throws,
And takes it in her hand, and waves it over
The blossomed thorn-tree and her sleeping lover.

Nine times she waved the fluttering wimple round
And made a little plot of magic ground;
And in that daisied circle, as men say,
Is Merlin prisoner till the judgment-day,
But she herself whither she will can rove—
For she was passing weary of his love.

THE CHURCH OF BROU

I

THE CASTLE

Down the Savoy valleys sounding,
  Echoing round this castle old,
'Mid the distant mountain-chalets
  Hark! what bell for church is tolled?

In the bright October morning
  Savoy's Duke had left his bride.
From the castle, past the drawbridge,
  Flowed the hunters' merry tide.

Steeds are neighing, gallants glittering.
  Gay, her smiling lord to greet,
From her mullioned chamber-casement
  Smiles the Duchess Marguerite.

From Vienna, by the Danube,
  Here she came, a bride, in spring.
Now the autumn crisps the forest;
  Hunters gather, bugles ring.

Hounds are pulling, prickers swearing,
  Horses fret, and boar-spears glance.
Off!—They sweep the marshy forests,
  Westward on the side of France.

Hark! the game's on foot; they scatter!—
  Down the forest-ridings lone,
Furious, single horsemen gallop.—
  Hark! a shout—a crash—a groan!

Pale and breathless, came the hunters—
  On the turf dead lies the boar.
God! the Duke lies stretched beside him,
  Senseless, weltering in his gore.

In the dull October evening,
  Down the leaf-strewn forest-road,
To the castle, past the drawbridge,
  Came the hunters with their load.

  Sate the Duchess Marguerite.

Hark! below the gates unbarring!
  Tramp of men and quick commands!
—"*'Tis my lord come back from hunting.*"—
  And the Duchess claps her hands.

Slow and tirèd, came the hunters;
  Stopped in darkness in the court
—"Ho, this way, ye laggard hunters!
  To the hall! What sport, what sport?"—

Slow they entered with their master;
  In the hall they laid him down.
On his coat were leaves and blood-stains,
  On his brow an angry frown.

Dead her princely youthful husband
  Lay before his youthful wife,

Bloody 'neath the flaring sconces—
  And the sight froze all her life.

In Vienna, by the Danube,
  Kings hold revel, gallants meet.
Gay of old amid the gayest
  Was the Duchess Marguerite.

In Vienna, by the Danube,
  Feast and dance her youth beguiled.
Till that hour she never sorrowed;
  But from then she never smiled.

'Mid the Savoy mountain-valleys
  Far from town or haunt of man,
Stands a lonely church, unfinished,
  Which the Duchess Maud began;

Old, that Duchess stern began it,
  In grey age, with palsied hands;
But she died while it was building,
  And the Church unfinished stands—

Stands as erst the builders left it,
  When she sank into her grave;
Mountain greensward paves the chancel;
  Harebells flower in the nave.

—"In my castle all is sorrow,"
  Said the Duchess Marguerite then;
"Guide me, some one, to the mountain!
  We will build the Church again."—

Sandalled palmers, faring homeward,
  Austrian knights from Syria came.
—"Austrian wanderers bring, O warders!
  Homage to your Austrian dame."—

From the gate the warders answered :
  —" Gone, O knights, is she you knew !
Dead our Duke, and gone his Duchess.
  Seek her at the Church of Brou ! "—

Austrian knights and march-worn palmers
  Climb the winding mountain-way ;
Reach the valley, where the fabric
  Rises higher day by day.

Stones are sawing, hammers ringing—
  On the work the bright sun shines ,
In the Savoy mountain-meadows,
  By the stream, below the pines.

On her palfrey white the Duchess
  Sate and watched her working train—
Flemish carvers, Lombard gilders,
  German masons, smiths from Spain.

Clad in black, on her white palfrey,
  Her old architect beside—
There they found her in the mountains,
  Morn and noon and eventide

There she sate, and watched the builders,
  Till the Church was roofed and done.
Last of all, the builders reared her
  In the nave a tomb of stone

On the tomb two forms they sculptured,
  Lifelike in the marble pale—
One, the Duke in helm and armour ;
  One, the Duchess in her veil

Round the tomb the carved stone fret-wor
  Was at Easter-tide put on.

Then the Duchess closed her labours;
And she died at the St. John.

II

The Church

Upon the glistening leaden roof
Of the new pile, the sunlight shines;
The stream goes leaping by.
The hills are clothed with pines sun-proof;
'Mid bright green fields, below the pines,
Stands the Church on high.
What Church is this, from men aloof?—
'Tis the Church of Brou.

At sunrise, from their dewy lair
Crossing the stream, the kine are seen
Round the wall to stray—
The churchyard wall that clips the square
Of open hill-sward fresh and green
Where last year they lay.
But all things now are ordered fair
Round the Church of Brou.

On Sundays, at the matin-chime,
The Alpine peasants, two and three,
Climb up here to pray;
Burghers and dames, at summer's prime,
Ride out to church from Chambery,
Dight with mantles gay.
But else it is a lonely time
Round the Church of Brou.

On Sundays, too, a priest doth come
From the walled town beyond the pass,
Down the mountain-way;
And then you hear the organ's hum,

You hear the white-robed priest say Mass,
    And the people pray.
But else the woods and fields are dumb
Round the Church of Brou.

And after church, when Mass is done,
The people to the nave repair
    Round the tomb to stray;
And marvel at the forms of stone,
And praise the chiselled broideries rare—
    Then they drop away.
The princely pair are left alone
In the Church of Brou.

III

The Tomb

So rest, for ever rest, O princely pair,
In your high Church, 'mid the still mountain air,
Where horn, and hound, and vassals, *never come!*
Only the blessèd saints are smiling dumb
From the rich painted windows of the nave
On aisle, and transept, and your marble grave;
Where thou, young Prince, shalt never more arise
From the fringed mattress where thy Duchess lies,
[illegible]s,
[illegible]nds

And thou, O Princess, shalt no more receive,
Thou and thy ladies, in the hall of state,
The jaded hunters with their bloody freight,
[illegible]

On the carved western front a flood of light
Streams from the setting sun, and colours bright

Prophets, transfigured Saints, and Martyrs brave,
In the vast western window of the nave;
And on the pavement round the tomb there glints
A chequer-work of glowing sapphire tints,
And amethyst, and ruby—then unclose
Your eyelids on the stone where ye repose,
And from your broidered pillows lift your heads,
And raise you on your cold white marble beds;
And looking down on the warm rosy tints
Which chequer, at your feet, the illumined flints,
Say: *What is this? we are in bliss—forgiven—*
Behold the pavement of the courts of Heaven!
Or let it be on autumn nights, when rain
Doth rustlingly above your heads complain
On the smooth leaden roof, and on the walls
Shedding her pensive light at intervals
The moon through the clere-story windows shines,
And the wind washes 'mid the mountain pines;
Then, gazing up through the dim pillars high,
The foliaged marble forest where ye lie:
Hush—ye will say—*it is eternity!*
This is the glimmering verge of Heaven, and these
The columns of the heavenly palaces.
And in the sweeping of the wind your ear
The passage of the Angels' wings will hear,
And on the lichen-crusted leads above
The rustle of the eternal rain of love.

THE NECKAN

IN summer, on the headlands,
The Baltic Sea along,
Sits Neckan with his harp of gold,
And sings his plaintive song.

Green rolls, beneath the headlands,
Green rolls the Baltic Sea:

And there, below the Neckan's feet,
  His wife and children be.

He sings not of the ocean,
  Its shells and roses pale.
Of earth, of earth the Neckan sings;
  He hath no other tale

He sits upon the headlands,
  And sings a mournful stave
Of all he saw and felt on earth,
  Far from the kind sea-wave.

Sings how, a knight, he wandered
  By castle, field, and town—
But earthly knights have harder hearts
  Than the sea children own.

Sings of his earthly bridal—
  Priest, knights, and ladies gay
—" And who art thou," the priest began,
  " Sir Knight, who wedd'st to-day ? "—

—" I am no knight," he answered;
  " From the sea-waves I come "—
The knights drew sword, the ladies screamed
  The surpliced priest stood dumb

He sings how from the chapel
  He vanished with his bride,
And bore her down to the sea-halls,
  Beneath the salt sea-tide.

He sings how she sits weeping
  'Mid shells that round her lie.
—" False Neckan shares my bed," she weeps
  " No Christian mate have I."—

He sings how through the billows
He rose to earth again,
And sought a priest to sign the cross,
That Neckan Heaven might gain.

He sings how, on an evening,
Beneath the birch-trees cool,
He sate and played his harp of gold,
Beside the river-pool.

Beside the pool sate Neckan—
Tears filled his mild blue eye.
On his white mule, across the bridge,
A cassocked priest rode by.

—"Why sitt'st thou there, O Neckan,
And play'st thy harp of gold?
Sooner shall this my staff bear leaves,
Than thou shalt Heaven behold."—

But, lo, the staff, it budded!
It greened, it branched, it waved.
—"O ruth of God," the priest cried out,
"This lost sea-creature saved!"

The cassocked priest rode onwards,
And vanished with his mule;
But Neckan in the twilight grey
Wept by the river-pool.

He said: The earth hath kindness,
The sea, the starry poles;
Earth, sea, and sky, and God above—
But, ah, not human souls!

In summer, on the headlands,
The Baltic Sea along,
Sits Neckan with his harp of gold,
And sings this plaintive song.

THE FORSAKEN MERMAN

COME, dear children, let us away;
Down and away below!
Now my brothers call from the bay,
Now the great winds shoreward blow;
Now the salt tides seaward flow,
Now the wild white horses play,
Champ and chafe and toss in the spray.
Children dear, let us away!
This way, this way!

Call her once before you go—
Call once yet!
In a voice that she will know:
"Margaret! Margaret!"
Children's voices should be dear
(Call once more) to a mother's ear;
Children's voices, wild with pain—
Surely she will come again!
Call her once and come away;
This way, this way!

"Mother dear, we cannot stay!"
The wild white horses foam and fret.
Margaret! Margaret!

Come, dear children, come away down!
Call no more!
One last look at the white-walled town,
And the little grey church on the windy shor
Then come down!
She will not come though you call all day.
Come away, come away!

Children dear, was it yesterday
We heard the sweet bells over the bay?

In the caverns where we lay,
Through the surf and through the swell,
The far-off sound of a silver bell ?
Sand-strewn caverns, cool and deep,
Where the winds are all asleep ;
Where the spent lights quiver and gleam ;
Where the salt weed sways in the stream ;
Where the sea-beasts ranged all round
n the ooze of their pasture-ground :
the sea-snakes coil and twine,
eir mail and bask in the brine ;
e great whales come sailing by,
nd sail, with unshut eye,
d the world for ever and aye ?
n did music come this way ?
dren dear, was it yesterday ?

ldren dear, was it yesterday
ll yet once) that she went away ?
ce she sate with you and me,
n a red gold throne in the heart of the sea,
nd the youngest sate on her knee.
he combed its bright hair, and she tended it we
When down swung the sound of the far-off bell.
She sighed, she looked up through the clear gree
She said : " I must go, for my kinsfolk pray
In the little grey church on the shore to-day.
'Twill be Easter-time in the world—ah me !
And I lose my poor soul, Merman ! here with
I said : " Go up, dear heart, through the wav
Say thy prayer, and come back to the kind s
She smiled, she went up through the surf in t
Children dear, was it yesterday ?

Children dear, were we long alone ?
" The sea grows stormy, the little ones moa
Long prayers," I said, " in the world they
Come ! " I said and we rose through the su

We went up the beach, by the sandy down
Where the sea-stocks bloom, to the white-walled town;

" Margaret, hist! come quick, we are here.
Dear heart," I said, " we are long alone;

Loud prays the priest, shut stands the doc
Come away, children, call no more!
Come away, come down, call no more!

Down, down, down!
Down to the depths of the sea!
She sits at her wheel in the humming town,
Singing most joyfully.
Hark what she sings. " O joy, O joy,
For the humming street, and the child with
For the priest, and the bell, and the holy w
For the wheel where I spun,
And the blessed light of the sun!"
And so she sings her fill,
Singing most joyfully,
Till the shuttle falls from her hand,
And the whizzing wheel stands still
She steals to the window, and looks at the s
And over the sand at the sea,
And her eyes are set in a stare;
And anon there breaks a sigh,
And anon there drops a tear,
From a sorrow-clouded eye,
And a heart sorrow-laden,

A long, long sigh;
For the cold strange eyes of a little Mermaiden,
And the gleam of her golden hair.

Come away, away children,
Come children, come down!
The hoarse wind blows colder;
Lights shine in the town.
She will start from her slumber
When gusts shake the door;
She will hear the winds howling,
Will hear the waves roar.
We shall see, while above us
The waves roar and whirl,
A ceiling of amber,
A pavement of pearl.
Singing: "Here came a mortal,
But faithless was she!
And alone dwell for ever
The kings of the sea."

But, children, at midnight,
When soft the winds blow,
When clear falls the moonlight,
When spring-tides are low;
When sweet airs come seaward
From heaths starred with broom,
And high rocks throw mildly
On the blanched sands a gloom;
Up the still, glistening beaches,
Up the creeks we will hie,
Over banks of bright seaweed
The ebb-tide leaves dry.
We will gaze, from the sand-hills,
At the white, sleeping town;
At the church on the hill-side—
And then come back down.
Singing: "There dwells a loved one

But cruel is she !
She left lonely for ever
The kings of the sea."

SAINT BRANDAN

SAINT BRANDAN sails the northern main ;
The brothe[illegible]

He heard, across the howling seas,
Chime convent-bells on wintry nights ;
He saw, on spray-swept Hebrides,
Twinkle the monastery lights ;

But north, still north, Saint Brandan steered—
And now no bells, no convents more !
The hurtling Polar lights are neared,
The sea without a human shore.

At last—(it was the Christmas night ;
Stars shone after a day of storm)—
He sees float past an iceberg white,
And on it—Christ !—a living form !

That furtive mien, that scowling eye,
Of hair that red and tufted fell——
It is—Oh, where shall Brandan fly ?—
The traitor Judas, out of hell !

Palsied with terror, Brandan sate ;
The moon was bright, the iceberg near.
He hears a voice sigh humbly : " Wait !
By high permission I am here.

"One moment wait, thou holy man!
On earth my crime, my death, they knew;
My name is under all men's ban—
Ah, tell them of my respite too!

"Tell them, one blessed Christmas night—
(It was the first after I came,
Breathing self-murder, frenzy, spite,
To rue my guilt in endless flame)—

"I felt, as I in torment lay
'Mid the souls plagued by heavenly power,
An angel touch mine arm, and say:
Go hence, and cool thyself an hour!

"'Ah, whence this mercy, Lord?' I said.
The Leper recollect, said he,
Who asked the passers-by for aid,
In Joppa, and thy charity.

"Then I remembered how I went,
In Joppa, through the public street,
One morn when the sirocco spent
Its storms of dust, with burning heat;

"And in the street a Leper sate,
Shivering with fever, naked, old;
Sand raked his sores from heel to pate,
The hot wind fevered him five-fold.

"He gazed upon me as I passed,
And murmured: *Help me, or I die!*—
To the poor wretch my cloak I cast,
Saw him look eased, and hurried by.

"Oh, Brandan, think what grace divi
What blessing must full goodness sho

When fragment of it small, like mine,
Hath such inestimable power!

"Well-fed, well-clothed, well-friended, I
Did that chance act of good, that one!
Then went my way to kill and lie—
Forgot my good as soon as done.

"That germ of kindness, in the womb
Of

"Once every year, when carols wake,
On earth, the Christmas-night's repose,
Arising from the sinners' lake,
I journey to these healing snows.

"I stanch with ice my burning breast,
With silence balm my whirling brain.
O Brandan! to this hour of rest
That Joppan leper's ease was pain!"——

Tears started to Saint Brandan's eyes;
He bowed his head; he breathed a prayer.
When he looked up—tenantless lies
The iceberg in the frosty air!

A MODERN SAPPH

They are gone—all is still! Foolish
quiver?
Nothing stirs on the lawn but the qu
Far up shines the house, and beneath, f
Here lean, my head, on this cool balu

Ere he come—ere the boat, by the shining-branched border
Of dark elms shoot round, dropping down the proud stream,
Let me pause, let me strive, in myself make some order,
Ere their boat-music sound, ere their broidered flags gleam!

Last night we stood earnestly talking together;
She entered—that moment his eyes turned from me!
Fastened on her dark hair, and her wreath of white heather!—
As yesterday was, so to-morrow will be.

Their love, let me know, must grow strong and yet stronger,
Their passion burn more, ere it ceases to burn.
They must love—while they must! But the hearts that love longer
Are rare; ah, most loves but flow once, and return!

I shall suffer, but they will outlive their affection!
I shall weep, but their love will be cooling!—and he,
As he drifts to fatigue, discontent, and dejection,
Will be brought, thou poor heart, how much nearer to thee

For cold is his eye to mere beauty, who, breaking
The strong spell which passion upon him hath hurled
Disenchanted by habit, and newly awaking,
Looks languidly round on a gloom-buried world.

Through that gloom he will see but a shadow appeari
Perceive but a voice as I come to his side—
But deeper their voice grows, and nobler their bearin
Whose youth in the fires of anguish hath died.

So, to wait !——But what notes down the wind, hark ! are driving ?
'Tis he ! 'tis their flag, shooting round by the trees !—
Let *my* turn, if it *will* come, be swift in arriving !
Ah, hope cannot long lighten torments like these !

Hast thou yet dealt him, O life, thy full measure ?
World, have thy children yet bowed at his knee ?
Hast thou with myrtle-leaf crowned him, O pleasure ?—
Crown, crown him quickly, and leave him for me !

A PICTURE AT NEWSTEAD

WHAT made my heart, at Newstead, fullest swell ?—
[illegible] s cry

Who struck, in heat, his child he loved so well,
And his child's reason flickered, and did die.
Painted (he willed it) in the gallery
They hang ; the picture doth the story tell.

Behold the stern, mailed father, staff in hand !
The little fair-haired son, with vacant gaze,
Where no more lights of sense or knowledge are !

Methinks the woe which made that father stand
Baring his dumb remorse to future days,
Was woe than Byron's woe more tragic far.

SHAKSPEARE

OTHERS abide our question—Thou art free !
We ask and ask—Thou smilest and art still,
Out-topping knowledge ! So some sovran hill
Who to the stars uncrowns his majesty,

Planting his steadfast footsteps in the sea,
Making the heaven of heavens his dwelling-place,
Spares but the border, often, of his base
To the foiled searching of mortality;

And thou, whose head did stars and sunbeams know,
Self-schooled, self-scanned, self-honoured, self-secure,
Didst walk on earth unguessed at.—Better so!

All pains the immortal spirit must endure,
All weakness which impairs, all griefs which bow,
Find their sole voice in that victorious brow.

RACHEL

I

In Paris all looked hot and like to fade;
Brown, in the garden of the Tuileries,
Brown with September, drooped the chestnut-trees.
'Twas dawn; a brougham rolled through the streets, and made

Halt at the white and silent colonnade
Of the French Theatre. Worn with disease,
Rachel, with eyes no gazing can appease,
Sate in her brougham, and those blank walls surveyed.

She follows the gay world, whose swarms have fled
To Switzerland, to Baden, to the Rhine;
Why stops she by this empty play-house drear?

Ah, where the spirit its highest life hath led,
All spots, matched with that spot, are less divine,
And Rachel's Switzerland, her Rhine, is here!

II

UNTO a lonely villa, in a dell
Above the fragrant warm Provençal shore,
The dying Rachel in a chair they bore
Up the steep pine-plumed paths of the Estrelle,

And laid her in a stately room, where fell
The shadow of a marble Muse of
The
F

The fret and misery of our northern towns,
In this her life's last day, our poor, our pain,
Our jangle of false wits, our climate's frowns,

Do for this
Sole obje
The beau

III

SPRUNG from the blood of Israel's scattered race,
At a mean inn in
To forms from
Tricked out w

Imparting life renewed, old classic grace;
Then soothing with thy Christian strain forlorn,
A-Kempis! her departing soul outworn,
While by her bedside Hebrew rites have place—

Ah, not the radiant spirit of Greece alone
She had—one power, which made her breast its home
In her, like us, there clashed, contending powers,

Germany, France, Christ, Moses, Athens, Rome.
The strife, the mixture in her soul, are ours;
Her genius and her glory are her own.

MEMORIAL VERSES

April 1850

Goethe in Weimar sleeps, and Greece,
Long since, saw Byron's struggle cease.
But one such death remained to come;
The last poetic voice is dumb—
We stand to-day by Wordsworth's tomb.

When Byron's eyes were shut in death,
We bowed our head and held our breath.
He taught us little; but our soul
Had *felt* him like the thunder's roll.
With shivering heart the strife we saw
Of passion with eternal law;
And yet with reverential awe
We watched the fount of fiery life
Which served for that Titanic strife.

When Goethe's death was told, we said:
Sunk, then, is Europe's sagest head!
Physician of the iron age,
Goethe has done his pilgrimage!
He took the suffering human race,
He read each wound, each weakness clear,
And struck his finger on the place,
And said: *Thou ailest here, and here!*—
He looked on Europe's dying hour
Of fitful dream and feverish power;
His eye plunged down the weltering strife,
The turmoil of expiring life;

He said: *The end is everywhere!*
Art still has truth, take refuge there!—
And he was happy, if to know
Causes of things, and far below
His feet to see the lurid flow
Of terror, and insane distress,
And headlong fate, be happiness.

And Wordsworth!—Ah, pale ghosts, rejoice!
For never has such soothing voice
Been to your shadowy world conveyed,

Had fallen—on this iron time
Of doubts, disputes, distractions, fears.
He found us when the age had bound
Our souls in its benumbing round—
He spoke, and loosed our heart in tears.
He laid us as we lay at birth
On the cool flowery lap of earth;
Smiles broke from us and we had ease.
The hills were round us, and the breeze
Went o'er the sun-lit fields again;
Our foreheads felt the wind and rain.
Our youth returned, for there was shed
On spirits that had long been dead,
Spirits dried up and closely furled,
The freshness of the early world

Ah, since dark days still bring to light
Man's prudence and man's fiery might,
Time may restore us in his course
Goethe's sage mind and Byron's force;
But where will Europe's latter hour

Again find Wordsworth's healing power?
Others will teach us how to dare,
And against fear our breast to steel;
Others will strengthen us to bear—
But who, ah! who, will make us feel?
The cloud of mortal destiny,
Others will front it fearlessly—
But who, like him, will put it by?

Keep fresh the grass upon his grave,
O Rotha! with thy living wave.
Sing him thy best! for few or none
Hears thy voice right, now he is gone.

STANZAS

MEMORY OF THE LATE EDWARD QUILLINAN, ESQ.

I SAW him sensitive in frame,
I knew his spirits low;
And wished him health, success, and fame—
I do not wish it now.

For these are all their own reward,
And leave no good behind;
They try us, oftenest make us hard,
Less modest, pure, and kind.

Alas! yet to the suffering man,
In this his mortal state,
Friends could not give what fortune can—
Health, ease, a heart elate.

But he is now by fortune foiled
No more; and we retain
The memory of a man unspoiled,
Sweet, generous, and humane;

With all the fortunate have not,

STANZAS COMPOSED AT CARNAC

MAY 6, 1859

FAR on its rocky knoll descried
Saint Michael's chapel cuts the sky;
I climbed,—beneath me, bright and wide,
Lay the lone coast of Brittany

Bright in the sunset, weird and still,
It lay beside the Atlantic wave,
As though the wizard Merlin's will
Yet charmed it from his forest-grave

Behind me on their grassy sweep,
Bearded with lichen, scrawled and grey,
The giant stones of Carnac sleep,
In the mild evening of the May

No priestly stern procession now
Streams through their rows of pillars old
No victims bleed, no Druids bow;
Sheep make the daisied aisles their fold

From bush to bush the cuckoo flies,

And o'er the glistening, lonely land,
Rise up, all round, the Christian spires;
The church of Carnac, by the strand,
Catches the westering sun's last fires.

And there, across the watery way,
See, low above the tide at flood,
The sickle-sweep of Quiberon bay,
Whose beach once ran with loyal blood!

And beyond that, the Atlantic wide!—
All round, no soul, no boat, no hail!
But, on the horizon's verge descried,
Hangs, touched with light, one snowy sail!

Ah, where is he, who should have come
Where that far sail is passing now,
Past the Loire's mouth, and by the foam
Of Finistere's unquiet brow,

Home, round into the English wave?—
He tarries where the Rock of Spain[5]
Mediterranean waters lave;
He enters not the Atlantic main.

Oh, could he once have reached this air
Freshened by plunging tides, by showers!
Have felt this breath he loved, of fair
Cool northern fields, and grass, and flowers!

He longed for it—pressed on!—In vain!
At the Straits failed that spirit brave.
The south was parent of his pain,
The south is mistress of his grave.

A SUMMER NIGHT

In the deserted moon-blanched street

A break between the housetops shows
The moon, and, lost behind her, fading dim
Into the dewy dark obscurity
Down at the far horizon's rim,
Doth a whole tract of heaven disclose.

And to my mind the thought
Is on a sudden brought
Of a past night, and a far different scene.
Headlands stood out into the moon-lit deep
As clearly as at noon ,
The spring-tide's brimming flow
Heaved dazzlingly between ,
Houses with long white sweep
Girdled the glistening bay ;
Behind, through the soft air,
The blue haze-cradled mountains spread away

And the same vainly throbbing heart was there
And the same bright calm moon.

And the calm moonlight seems to say :
Hast thou then still the old unquiet breast,
Which never deadens into rest,
Nor ever feels the fiery glow
That whirls the spirit from itself away,
But fluctuates to and fro,
Never by passion quite possessed
And never quite benumbed by the world's sway ?–
And I, I know not if to pray

Still to be what I am, or yield, and be
Like all the other men I see.

For most men in a brazen prison live,
Where in the sun's hot eye,
With heads bent o'er their toil, they languidly
Their lives to some unmeaning taskwork give,
Dreaming of nought beyond their prison-wall.
And as, year after year,
Fresh products of their barren labour fall
From their tired hands, and rest
Never yet comes more near,
Gloom settles slowly down over their breast;
And while they try to stem
The waves of mournful thought by which they are prest,
Death in their prison reaches them,
Unfreed, having seen nothing, still unblest.

And the rest, a few,
Escape their prison, and depart
On the wide ocean of life anew.
There the freed prisoner, where'er his heart
Listeth, will sail;
Nor doth he know how there prevail,
Despotic on that sea,
Trade-winds which cross it from eternity.
Awhile he holds some false way, undebarred
By thwarting signs, and braves
The freshening wind and blackening waves.
And then the tempest strikes him; and between
The lightning-bursts is seen
Only a driving wreck,
And the pale master on his spar-strewn deck
With anguished face and flying hair
Grasping the rudder hard,
Still bent to make some port he knows not where,
Still standing for some false impossible shore.
And sterner comes the roar

Of sea and wind, and through the deepening gloom
Fainter and fainter wreck and helmsman loom,
And he too disappears, and comes no more.

Is there no life, but these alone?
Madman or slave, must man be one?

Plainness and clearness without shadow of stain!
Clearness divine!
Ye heavens, whose pure dark regions have no sign
[illegible]
Who have longed deeply once, and longed in vain,
But I will rather say that you remain
A world above man's head, to let him see
How boundless might his soul's horizons be,
How vast, yet of what clear transparency!
How it were good to live there, and breathe free!
How fair a lot to fill
Is left to each man still!

A SOUTHERN NIGHT

The sandy spits, the shore-locked lakes,
  Melt into open, moonlit sea;
The soft Mediterranean breaks
    At my feet, free.

Dotting the fields of corn and vine
  Like ghosts, the huge, gnarled olives stand
Behind, that lovely mountain-line!
    While, by the strand,

The limbs their wonted tasks refuse,
  The eyes are glazed, thou canst not speak;
And whiter than thy white burnous
    That wasted cheek!

Enough! The boat, with quiet shock,
  Unto its haven coming nigh,
Touches, and on Gibraltar's rock
    Lands thee, to die.

Ah me! Gibraltar's strand is far,
  But farther yet across the brine
Thy dear wife's ashes buried are,
    Remote from thine.

For there where morning's sacred fount
  Its golden rain on earth confers,
The snowy Himalayan Mount
    O'ershadows hers.

Strange irony of fate, alas,
  Which for two jaded English saves,
When from their dusty life they pass,
    Such peaceful graves!

In cities should we English lie,
  Where cries are rising ever new,
And men's incessant stream goes by!
    We who pursue

Our business with unslackening stride,
  Traverse in troops, with care-filled breast,
The soft Mediterranean side,
    The Nile, the East,

And see all sights from pole to pole,
  And glance, and nod, and bustle by—

Cette, with its glistening houses white,
  Curves with the curving beach away
To where the lighthouse beacons bright
    Far in the bay.

Ah, such a night, so soft, so lone,
  So moonlit, saw me once of yore [6]
Wander unquiet, and my own
    Vext heart deplore!

But now that trouble is forgot.
  Thy memory, thy pain, to-night,
My brother! and thine early lot,[7]
    Possess me quite.

The murmur of this Midland deep
  Is heard to-night around thy grave
There where Gibraltar's cannoned steep
    O'erfrowns the wave.

For there, with bodily anguish keen,
  With Indian heats at last fordone,
With public toil and private teen—
    Thou sank'st, alone.

Slow to a stop, at morning grey,
  I see the smoke-crowned vessel come;
Slow round her paddles dies away
    The seething foam.

A boat is lowered from her side;
  Ah, gently place him on the bench!
That spirit—if all have not yet died—
    A breath might quench.

Is this the eye, the footstep fast,
  The mien of youth we used to see,
Poor, gallant boy!—for such thou wast,
    Still art, to me.

The limbs their wonted tasks refuse,
  The eyes are glazed, thou canst not speak;
And whiter than thy white burnous
    That wasted cheek!

Enough! The boat, with quiet shock,
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Before we die.

ot by those hoary Indian hills,
Not by this gracious Midland sea
Whose floor to-night sweet moonshine fills,
Should our graves be !

Some sage, to whom the world was dead,
And men were specks, and life a play ;
Who made the roots of trees his bed,
And once a day

With staff and gourd his way did bend
To villages and homes of man,
For food to keep him till he end
His mortal span,

And the pure goal of being reach ;
Grey-headed, wrinkled, clad in white,
Without companion, without speech,
By day and night

Pondering God's mysteries untold,
And tranquil as the glacier-snows—
He by those Indian mountains old
Might well repose !

Some grey crusading knight austere,
Who bore Saint Louis company,
And came home hurt to death, and here
Landed to die ;

Some youthful troubadour, whose tongue
Filled Europe once with his love-pain,
Who here outwearied sunk, and sung
His dying strain ;

Some girl, who here from castle-bower,
  With furtive step and cheek of flame,
'Twixt myrtle-hedges all in flower
    By moonlight came

To meet her pirate-lover's ship,
  And from the wave-kissed marble stair
Beckoned him on, with quivering lip
    And floating hair,

And lived some moons in happy trance,
  Then learnt his death, and pined away—
Such by these waters of romance
    'Twas meet to lay!

But you—a grave for knight or sage,
  Romantic, solitary, still,
O spent ones of a work-day age!
    Befits you ill.

So sang I; but the midnight breeze
  Down to the brimmed moon-charmèd main
Comes softly through the olive-trees,
    And checks my strain.

I think of her, whose gentle tongue
  All plaint in her own cause controlled;
Of thee I think, my brother! young
    In heart, high-souled!

That comely face, that clustered brow,
  That cordial hand, that bearing free,
I see them still, I see them now,
    Shall always see!

And what but gentleness untired,
  And what but noble feeling warm,

And never once possess our soul
Before we die.

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Not by this gracious Midland sea
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That comely face, that clustered brow,
  That cordial hand, that bearing fre-
I see them still, I see them now,
    Shall always see!

And what but gentleness untired,
  And what but noble feeling warm,

Wherever shown, howe'er inspired,
Is grace, is charm?

What else is all these waters are,
What else is steeped in lucid sheen,
What else is bright, what else is fair,
What else serene?

Mild o'er her grave, ye mountains, shine!
Gently by his, ye waters, glide!
To that in you which is divine
They were allied.

RUGBY CHAPEL

November 1857

Coldly, sadly descends
The autumn evening! The field
Strewn with its dank yellow drifts
Of withered leaves, and the elms,
Fade into dimness apace,
Silent;—hardly a shout
From a few boys late at their play!
The lights come out in the street,
In the school-room windows; but cold,
Solemn, unlighted, austere,
Through the gathering darkness, arise
The chapel-walls, in whose bound
Thou, my father! art laid.

There thou dost lie, in the gloom
Of the autumn evening. But ah!
That word, *gloom*, to my mind
Brings thee back in the light
Of thy radiant vigour again!

In the gloom of November we passed
Days not of gloom at thy side;
Seasons impaired not the ray
Of thine even cheerfulness clear.
Such thou wast! and I stand
In the autumn evening, and think
Of bygone autumns with thee.

Fifteen years have gone round
Since thou arosest to tread,
In the summer morning, the road
Of death, at a call unforeseen,
Sudden! For fifteen years,
We who till then in thy shade
Rested as under the boughs
Of a mighty oak, have endured
Sunshine and rain as we might,
Bare, unshaded, alone,
Lacking the shelter of thee!

O strong soul, by what shore
Tarriest thou now? For that force,
Surely, has not been left vain!
Somewhere, surely, afar,
In the sounding labour-house vast
Of being, is practised that strength,
Zealous, beneficent, firm!

Yes, in some far-shining sphere,
Conscious or not of the past,
Still thou performest the word
Of the Spirit in whom thou dost live—
Prompt, unwearied, as here!
Still thou upraisest with zeal
The humble good from the ground,
Sternly repressest the bad!
Still, like a trumpet, dost rouse
Those who with half-open eyes

Tread the border-land dim
'Twixt vice and virtue; reviv'st,
Succourest!—this was thy work,
This was thy life upon earth.

What is the course of the life
Of mortal men on the earth?—
Most men eddy about
Here and there—eat and drink,
Chatter and love and hate,
Gather and squander, are raised
Aloft, are hurled in the dust,
Striving blindly, achieving
Nothing; and then they die—
Perish! and no one asks
Who or what they have been,
More than he asks what waves,
In the moonlit solitudes mild
Of the midmost Ocean, have swelled,
Foamed for a moment, and gone.

And there are some, whom a thirst
Ardent, unquenchable, fires,
Not with the crowd to be spent—
Not without aim to go round
In an eddy of purposeless dust,
Effort unmeaning and vain.
Ah yes, some of us strive
Not without action to die
Fruitless, but something to snatch
From dull oblivion, nor all
Glut the devouring grave!
We, we have chosen our path—
Path to a clear-purposed goal,
Path of advance!—but it leads
A long, steep journey, through sunk
Gorges, o'er mountains in snow!
Cheerful, with friends, we set forth—

Then, on the height, comes the storm!
Thunder crashes from rock
To rock, the cataracts reply;
Lightnings dazzle our eyes;
Roaring torrents have breached
The track—the stream-bed descends
In the place where the wayfarer once
Planted his footstep—the spray
Boils o'er its borders! aloft,
The unseen snow-beds dislodge
Their hanging ruin;—alas,
Havoc is made in our train!
Friends who set forth at our side
Falter, are lost in the storm!
We, we only, are left!
With frowning foreheads, with lips
Sternly compressed, we strain on,
On—and at nightfall, at last,
Come to the end of our way,
To the lonely inn 'mid the rocks;
Where the gaunt and taciturn host
Stands on the threshold, the wind
Shaking his thin white hairs—
Holds his lantern to scan
Our storm-beat figures, and asks:
Whom in our party we bring?
Whom we have left in the snow?

Sadly we answer. We bring
Only ourselves! we lost
Sight of the rest in the storm!
Hardly ourselves we fought through,
Stripped, without friends, as we are!
Friends, companions, and train
The avalanche swept from our side.

But thou wouldst not *alone*
Be saved, my father! *alone*

Conquer and come to thy goal,
Leaving the rest in the wild.
We were weary, and we
Fearful, and we, in our march,
Fain to drop down and to die.
Still thou turnedst, and still
Beckonedst the trembler, and still
Gavest the weary thy hand !
If, in the paths of the world,
Stones might have wounded thy feet,
Toil or dejection have tried
Thy spirit, of that we saw
Nothing ! to us thou wert still
Cheerful, and helpful, and firm.
Therefore to thee it was given
Many to save with thyself ;
And, at the end of thy day,
O faithful shepherd ! to come,
Bringing thy sheep in thy hand.

And through thee I believe
In the noble and great who are gone ;
Pure souls honoured and blest
By former ages, who else—
Such, so soulless, so poor,
Is the race of men whom I see—
Seemed but a dream of the heart,
Seemed but a cry of desire.
Yes ! I believe that there lived
Others like thee in the past,
Not like the men of the crowd
Who all round me to-day
Bluster or cringe, and make life
Hideous, and arid, and vile ;
But souls tempered with fire,
Fervent, heroic, and good,
Helpers and friends of mankind.

Servants of God!—or sons
Shall I not call you? because
Not as servants ye knew
Your Father's innermost mind,
His, who unwillingly sees
One of his little ones lost—
Yours is the praise, if mankind
Hath not as yet in its march
Fainted, and fallen, and died!

See! *in the rocks of the world*
Marches the host of mankind,
A feeble, wavering line!
Where are they tending?—A God
Marshalled them, gave them their goal.—
Ah, but the way is so long!
Years they have been in the wild!
Sore thirst plagues them; the rocks,
Rising all round, overawe
Factions divide them—their host
Threatens to break, to dissolve—
Ah, keep, keep them combined!
Else, of the myriads who fill
That army, not one shall arrive!
Sole they shall stray; in the rocks
Labour for ever in vain,
Die one by one in the waste.

Then, in such hour of need
Of your fainting, dispirited race,
Ye, like angels, appear,
Radiant with ardour divine.
Beacons of hope, ye appear!
Languor is not in your heart,

Ye move through the ranks, recall
The stragglers, refresh the outworn,
Praise, re-inspire the brave!
Order, courage, return;
Eyes rekindling, and prayers,
Follow your steps as ye go.
Ye fill up the gaps in our files,
Strengthen the wavering line,
Stablish, continue our march,
On, to the bound of the waste,
On, to the City of God!

TO A GIPSY CHILD BY THE SEA-SHORE

DOUGLAS, ISLE OF MAN

HE port lies bright under the August sun,
ay shine the waters and the clustered pier;
Blithely, this morn, old Ocean's work is done,
And blithely do these sea-birds hover near.

Poor child, whom the light air of childish joy
Wafts not from thine own thoughts—of graver strain,
Surely, than those which should thine age employ—
A weight of meditation mixt with pain!

Blithe all else stirs, thou stirrest not!—averse
From thine own mother's breast, that knows not thee,
With eyes which seek thine eyes thou dost converse,
And thy dark mournful vision rests on me.

Glooms that go deep as thine I have not known,
Moods of fantastic sadness, nothing worth!
Musings, that ere they could grow ripe were flown,
And grief that healed at every smile of earth.

Ah! thine was not the shelter, but the fray.

s glad?
?—
And never angel's sorrow so forlorn.

Is the calm thine of stoic souls, who weigh
Life well, and find it wanting, nor deplore;
But in disdainful silence turn away,
Stand mute, self-centred, stern, and dream no more?

Or do I wait, to hear some grey-haired king
Unravel all his many-coloured lore,
Whose mind hath known all arts of governing,
Mused much, loved life a little, loathed it more?

Down thy pale cheek those lines of shadow slope,
Which years, to most, and care, and suffering, give;—
Thou hast foreknown the vanity of hope,
Foreseen thy harvest—yet proceed'st to live!

O meek anticipant of that sure pain
Whose sureness grey-haired scholars hardly learn!
What wonder shall time breed, to swell thy strain?
What heavens, what earth, what suns shalt thou discern?

ooks no star,
pall,
too far,
Have known too much——or else forgotten all!

The Guide of our dark steps a triple veil
Betwixt our senses and our sorrow keeps;

Hath sown with cloudless passages the tale
Of grief, and eased us with a thousand sleeps.

Ah! not the nectarous poppy lovers use,
Not daily labour's dull, Lethæan spring,
Oblivion in lorn angels can infuse
Of the soiled glory, and the trailing wing;

And though thou glean, what strenuous gleaners may,
In earth's thronged fields where winning comes by strife;
And though the just sun gild, as all men pray,
Some reaches of thy storm-vext stream of life;

Though that blank sunshine blind thee; though the cloud
That severed the world's march and thine, be gone;
Though ease dulls grace, and wisdom is too proud
To halve a house that should be all her own—

Once, ere thy day go down, thou shalt discern,
Oh once, ere night, in thy success, thy chain!
Ere the long evening close, thou shalt return,
And wear this majesty of grief again.

REQUIESCAT

Strew on her roses, roses,
  And never a spray of yew!
In quiet she reposes;
  Ah! would that I did too.

Her mirth the world required;
  She bathed it in smiles of glee.
But her heart was tired, tired,
  And now they let her be.

Her life was turning, turning,
  In mazes of heat and sound;
But for peace her soul was yearning,
  And now peace laps her round.

Her cabined, ample spirit,
  It fluttered and failed for breath;
To-night it doth inherit
  The vasty hall of death.

FADED LEAVES

1 *The River*

Still glides the stream, slow drops the boat
[illegible]
[illegible]
None speaks, none heeds; ah, turn thy head!

Let those arch eyes now softly shine,
That mocking mouth grow sweetly bland,
Ah, let them rest, those eyes, on mine!
On mine let rest that lovely hand!

My pent-up tears oppress my brain,
My heart is swoln with love unsaid—
Ah, let me weep, and tell my pain,
And on thy shoulder rest my head!

Before I die—before the soul,
Which now is mine, must re-attain
Immunity from my control,
And wander round the world again!

Before this teased o'erlaboured heart
For ever leaves its vain employ,

ad to its deep habitual smart,
id dead to hopes of future joy.

2. *Too Late*

Each on his own strict line we move,
And some find death ere they find love ;
So far apart their lives are thrown
From the twin soul that halves their own.

And sometimes, by still harder fate,
The lovers meet, but meet too late.
—Thy heart is mine !—*True, true ! ah true !*
—Then, love, thy hand !—*Ah no ! adieu !*

3. *Separation*

Stop !—not to me, at this bitter departing,
Speak of the sure consolations of time !
resh be the wound, still-renewed be its smarting,
So but thy image endure in its prime !

But, if the steadfast commandment of Nature
Wills that remembrance should always decay—
If the loved form and the deep-cherished feature
Must, when unseen, from the soul fade away—

Me let no half-effaced memories cumber !
Fled, fled at once, be all vestige of thee !
Deep be the darkness, and still be the slumber—
Dead be the past and its phantoms to me !

Then, when we meet, and thy look strays toward
Scanning my face and the changes wrought the
Who, let me say, *is this stranger regards me,*
With the grey eyes and the lovely brown hair ?

4. *On the Rhine*

VAIN is the effort to forget!
Some day I shall be cold, I know,
As is the eternal moon-lit snow
Of the high Alps, to which I go—
But ah, not yet! not yet!

Vain is the agony of grief!
'Tis true, indeed, an iron knot
Ties straitly up from mine thy lot,
And were it snapt—thou lov'st me not!
But is despair relief?

Awhile let me with thought have done;
And as [illegible]
And t[illegible]
Lie s[illegible]
Of the slow-sinking sun;

So let me lie, and calm as they
Let beam upon my inward view
Those eyes of deep, soft, lucent hue—
Eyes too expressive to be blue,
Too lovely to be grey!

Ah quiet, all things feel thy balm!
Those blue hills too, this river's flow,
Were restless once, but long ago.
Tamed is their turbulent youthful glow
Their joy is in their calm.

5. *Longing*

COME to me in my dreams, and then
By day I shall be well again!

For so the night will more than pay
The hopeless longing of the day.

Come, as thou cam'st a thousand times,
A messenger from radiant climes,
And smile on thy new world, and be
As kind to others as to me!

Or, as thou never cam'st in sooth,
Come now, and let me dream it truth!
And part my hair, and kiss my brow,
And say: *My love! why sufferest thou?*

Come to me in my dreams, and then
By day I shall be well again!
For so the night will more than pay
The hopeless longing of the day.

THE SCHOLAR-GIPSY[8]

Go, for they call you, shepherd, from the hill!
Go, shepherd, and untie the wattled cotes!
No longer leave thy wistful flock unfed,
Nor let thy bawling fellows rack their throats,
Nor the cropped grasses shoot another head!
But when the fields are still,
And the tired men and dogs all gone to rest,
And only the white sheep are sometimes seen
Cross and recross the strips of moon-blanched green,
Come, shepherd, and again begin the quest!

Here, where the reaper was at work of late—
In this high field's dark corner, where he leaves
His coat, his basket, and his earthen cruise,
And in the sun all morning binds the sheaves,

Then here, at noon, comes back his stores to use
Here will I sit and wait,
While to my ear from uplands far away
The bleating of the folded flocks is borne,

Screened is this nook o'er the high, half-reaped field,
And here till sun-down, shepherd, will I be!
Through the thick corn the scarlet poppies peep
And round green roots and yellowing stalks I see
Pale blue convolvulus in tendrils creep;
And air-swept lindens yield
Their scent, and rustle down their perfumed showe
Of bloom on the bent grass where I am laid,
And bower me from the August sun with shade
And the eye travels down to Oxford's towers.

And near me on the grass lies Glanvil's book—
Come, let me read the oft-read tale again!
The story of that Oxford scholar poor,
Of shining parts and quick inventive brain,
Who, tired of knocking at preferment's door,
One summer morn forsook
His friends, and went to learn the gipsy lore,
And roamed the world with that wild brotherhoo
And came, as most men deemed, to little good,
But came to Oxford and his friends no more.

But once, years after, in the country-lanes,
Two scholars whom at college erst he knew
Met him, and of his way of life inquired
Whereat he answered, that the gipsy crew,
His mates, had arts to rule as they desired
The workings of men's brains,
And they can bind them to what thoughts they wi
"And I," he said, "the secret of their art,

When fully learned, will to the world impart;
But it needs heaven-sent moments for this skill!"
This said, he left them, and returned no more.—
But rumours hung about the country-side,
That the lost Scholar long was seen to stray,
Seen by rare glimpses, pensive and tongue-tied,
In hat of antique shape, and cloak of grey,
The same the gipsies wore.
Shepherds had met him on the Hurst in spring;
At some lone alehouse in the Berkshire moors,
On the warm ingle-bench, the smock-frocked b
Had found him seated at their entering,

But, 'mid their drink and clatter, he would fly;—
And I myself seem half to know thy looks,
And put the shepherds, wanderer, on thy tr
And boys who in lone wheatfields scare the ro
I ask if thou hast passed their quiet place;
Or in my boat I lie
Moored to the cool bank in the summer heat
'Mid wide grass meadows which the sunsh
And watch the warm green-muffled Cumn
And wonder if thou haunt'st their shy retr

For most, I know, thou lov'st retirèd ground
Thee, at the ferry, Oxford riders blithe,
Returning home on summer nights, ha
Crossing the stripling Thames at Bab-loc
Trailing in the cool stream thy fingers
As the punt's rope chops round;
And leaning backward in a pensive drea
And fostering in thy lap a heap of flo
Plucked in shy fields and distant Wyc
And thine eyes resting on the moonlit

And then they land, and thou art seen
Maidens who from the distant hamle

And purple orchises with spotted leaves—
But none has words she can report of thee.

And, above Godstow Bridge, when hay-time's he
In

W

Thames,
To bathe in the abandoned lasher pass,
Have often passed thee near
Sitting upon the river bank o'ergrown;
Marked thine outlandish garb, thy figure spa
Thy dark vague eyes, and soft abstracted ai
But, when they came from bathing, thou wert

At some lone homestead in the Cumner hills,
Where at her open door the housewife darns,
Thou hast been seen, or hanging on a gate
To watch the threshers in the mossy barns
Children, who early range these slopes and l
For cresses from the rills,
Have known thee haunting, all an April day,
The springing pastures and the feeding kine
And marked thee, when the stars come o
shine,
Through the long dewy grass move slow away

In autumn, on the skirts of Bagley-wood,
Where most the gipsies by the turf-edged way
Pitch their smoked tents, and every bush yo
With scarlet patches tagged and shreds of grey

Above the forest-ground called Thessaly—
The blackbird picking food
Sees thee, nor stops his meal, nor fears at all!
So often has he known thee past him stray,
Rapt, twirling in thy hand a withered spray,
And waiting for the spark from Heaven to fall.

And once, in winter, on the causeway chill
Where home through flooded fields foot-travellers
Have I not passed thee on the wooden bridge
Wrapt in thy cloak and battling with the snow,
Thy face toward Hinksey and its wintry ridge
And thou hast climbed the hill,
And gained the white brow of the Cumner range;
Turned once to watch, while thick the snowflake fall,
The line of festal light in Christ-Church hall—
Then sought thy straw in some sequestered grange.

But what—I dream! Two hundred years are flown
Since first thy story ran through Oxford halls,
And the grave Glanvil did the tale inscribe
That thou wert wandered from the studious walls
To learn strange arts, and join a gipsy tribe.
And thou from earth art gone
Long since, and in some quiet churchyard laid!
Some country nook, where o'er thy unknown
Tall grasses and white flowering nettles wave
Under a dark red-fruited yew-tree's shade.

—No, no, thou hast not felt the lapse of hours!
For what wears out the life of mortal men?
'Tis that from change to change their being
'Tis that repeated shocks, again, again,
Exhaust the energy of strongest souls,
And numb the elastic powers.
Till having used our nerves with bliss and t
And tired upon a thousand schemes our

Who most has suffered, takes dejectedly
His seat upon the intellectual throne;
And all his store of sad experience he
Lays bare of wretched days;
Tells us his misery's birth and growth and signs,
And how the dying spark of hope was fed,
And how the breast was soothed, and how the head
And all his hourly varied anodynes.

This for our wisest! and we others pine,
And wish the long unhappy dream would end,
And waive all claim to bliss, and try to bear,
With close-lipped patience for our only friend,
Sad patience, too near neighbour to despair;
But none has hope like thine!
Thou through the fields and through the woods dos
stray,
Roaming the country-side, a truant boy,
Nursing thy project in unclouded joy,
And every doubt long blown by time away.

O born in days when wits were fresh and clear,
And life ran gaily as the sparkling Thames;
Before this strange disease of modern life,
With its sick hurry, its divided aims,
Its heads o'ertaxed, its palsied hearts, was rife—
Fly hence, our contact fear!
Still fly, plunge deeper in the bowering wood!
Averse, as Dido did with gesture stern
From her false friend's approach in Hades turn,
Wave us away, and keep thy solitude!

Still nursing the unconquerable hope,
Still clutching the inviolable shade,
With a free onward impulse brushing through,
By night, the silvered branches of the glade—
Far on the forest-skirts, where none pursue,
On some mild pastoral slope

THYRSIS[9]

A MONODY, *to commemorate the author's friend,* ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH, *who died at Florence,* 1861

How changed is here each spot man makes or fills !
In the two Hinkseys nothing keeps the same ;
The village-street its haunted mansion lacks,
And from the sign is gone Sibylla's name,
And from the roofs the twisted chimney-stacks ;—
Are ye too changed, ye hills ?
See, 'tis no foot of unfamiliar men
To-night from Oxford up your pathway strays !
Here came I often, often, in old days ;
Thyrsis and I ; we still had Thyrsis then.

Runs it not here, the track by Childsworth Farm,
Past the high wood, to where the elm-tree crowns
The hill behind whose ridge the sunset flames ?
The signal-elm, that looks on Ilsley Downs,
The Vale, the three lone wears, the youthful Thames !—
This winter-eve is warm,
Humid the air ! leafless, yet soft as spring,
The tender purple spray on copse and briers !
And that sweet city with her dreaming spires,
She needs not June for beauty's heightening,

Lovely all times she lies, lovely to-night !—
Only, methinks, some loss of habit's power
Befalls me wandering through this upland dim ;
Once passed I blindfold here, at any hour,
Now seldom come I, since I came with him.
That single elm-tree bright
ainst the west—I miss it ! is it gone ?
We prized it dearly ; while it stood, we said,

She loved the Dorian pipe, the Dorian strain.
  But ah, of our poor Thames she never heard!
  Her foot the Cumner cowslips never stirred!
And we should tease her with our plaint in vain.

Well! wind-dispersed and vain the words will be,
  Yet, Thyrsis, let me give my grief its hour
    In the old haunt, and find our tree-topped hill!
  Who, if not I, for questing here hath power?
    I know the wood which hides the daffodil,
      I know the Fyfield tree,
  I know what white, what purple fritillaries
    The grassy harvest of the river-fields,
    Above by Ensham, down by Sandford, yields,
  And what sedged brooks are Thames's tributaries;

I know these slopes; who knows them if not I?—
  But many a dingle on the loved hill-side,
    With thorns once studded, old, white-blossomed trees,
  Where thick the cowslips grew, and far descried,
    High towered the spikes of purple orchises,
      Hath since our day put by
  The coronals of that forgotten time;
    Down each green bank hath gone the ploughboy's team,
    And only in the hidden brookside gleam
  Primroses, orphans of the flowery prime.

Where is the girl, who, by the boatman's door,
  Above the locks, above the boating throng,
    Unmoored our skiff, when, through the Wytham flats,
  Red loosestrife and blond meadow-sweet among,
    And darting swallows, and light water-gnats,
      We tracked the shy Thames shore?
  Where are the mowers, who, as the tiny swell
    Of our boat passing heaved the river-grass,

Stood with suspended scythe to see us pass :—
They all are gone, and thou art gone as well.

Yes, thou art gone ! and round me too the night
In ever-nearing circle weaves her shade ;
I see her veil draw soft across the day,
I feel her slowly chilling breath invade
The cheek grown thin, the brown hair sprent wit
grey ;
I feel her finger light
Laid pausefully upon life's headlong train ;—
The foot less prompt to meet the morning dew,
The heart less bounding at emotion new,
And hope, once crushed, less quick to spring again.

And long the way appears, which seemed so short
To the less practised eye of sanguine youth ;
And high the mountain-tops, in cloudy air,
The mountain-tops where is the throne of Truth,
Tops in life's morning-sun so bright and bare !
Unbreachable the fort
Of the long-battered world uplifts its wall ;
And strange and vain the earthly turmoil grows,
And near and real the charm of thy repose,
And night as welcome as a friend would fall.

But hush ! the upland hath a sudden loss
Of quiet ;—look ! adown the dusk hill-side,
A troop of Oxford hunters going home,
As in old days, jovial and talking, ride !
From hunting with the Berkshire hounds
come.—
Quick, let me fly, and cross
Into yon further field !—'Tis done ; and see,
Backed by the sunset, which doth glorify
The orange and pale violet evening-sky,
Bare on its lonely ridge, the Tree ! the Tree !

he white fog creeps from bush to bush about,
The west unflushes, the high stars grow bright,
nd in the scattered farms the lights come out.
I cannot reach the signal-tree to-night,
Yet, happy omen, hail!
ear it from thy broad lucent Arno-vale
(For there thine earth-forgetting eyelids keep
The morningless and unawakening sleep
nder the flowery oleanders pale),

r it, O Thyrsis, still our tree is there!—

I trow, the mighty Mother doth not see!)
Vithin a folding of the Apennine,

u hearest the immortal chants of old!
utting his sickle to the perilous grain
In the hot cornfield of the Phrygian king,
or thee the Lityerses song again
Young Daphnis with his silver voice doth sing;[10]

re thou art gone, and me thou leavest here
ple in these fields; yet will I not despair!
Despair I will not, while I yet descry
Neath the soft canopy of English air

thy foot resumed its wandering way,
haunt, and on alone till night!

rare, grow now my visits here!
ise, not, as with thee of yore,
a reach of sheep-bells is my home!

at lonely tree against the western sky.
Still, still these slopes, 'tis clear,
Gipsy-Scholar haunts, outliving thee!
ields where soft sheep from cages pull the hay,
Woods with anemonies in flower till May,
Know him a wanderer still; then why not me?

A fugitive and gracious light he seeks,
Shy to illumine; and I seek it too!
This does not come with houses or with gold,
With place, with honour, and a flattering crew;
'Tis not in the world's market bought and sold!
But the smooth-slipping weeks
Drop by, and leave its seeker still untired;
Out of the heed of mortals he is gone,
He wends unfollowed, he must house alone;
Yet on he fares, by his own heart inspired.

Thou too, O Thyrsis, on like quest wast bound!
Thou wanderedst with me for a little hour!
Men gave thee nothing; but this happy quest,
If men esteemed thee feeble, gave thee power,
If men procured thee trouble, gave thee rest.
And this rude Cumner ground,
Its fir-topped Hurst, its farms, its quiet fields,
Here cam'st thou in thy jocund youthful time,
Here was thine height of strength, thy golden prime
And still the haunt beloved a virtue yields.

What though the music of thy rustic flute
Kept not for long its happy, country tone;
Lost it too soon, and learnt a stormy note
Of men contention-tost, of men who groan,
Which tasked thy pipe too sore, and tired
throat—
It failed, and thou wast mute!
Yet hadst thou alway visions of our light,
And long with men of care thou couldst not sta

And soon thy foot resumed its wandering way,
Left human haunt, and on alone till night!

Too rare, too rare, grow now my visits here!
'Mid city-noise, not, as with thee of yore,
Thyrsis, in reach of sheep-bells is my home!
Then through the great town's harsh, heart-wearying roar,
Let in thy voice a whisper often come,
To chase fatigue and fear:
Why faintest thou? I wandered till I died.
Roam on! the light we sought is shining still.
Dost thou ask proof? Our tree yet crowns the hill,
Our Scholar travels yet the loved hillside.

EMPEDOCLES ON ETNA

PERSONS

EMPEDOCLES.
PAUSANIAS, *a Physician.*
CALLICLES, *a young Harp-player.*

The Scene of the Poem is on Mount Etna; at first in the forest region, afterwards on the summit of the mountain.

I have my harp too—that is well.—Apollo !
What mortal could be sick or sorry here ?
I know not in what mind Empedocles,
Whose mules I followed, may be coming up,
But if, as most men say, he is half mad
With exile, and with brooding on his wrongs,
Pausanias, his sage friend, who mounts with him,
Could scarce have lighted on a lovelier cure.
The mules must be below, far down. I hear
Their tinkling bells, mixed with the song of birds,
Rise faintly to me—now it stops !—Who's here ?
Pausanias ! and on foot ? alone ?

Pausanias

And thou, then ?
I left thee supping with Peisianax,
With thy head full of wine, and thy hair crowned,
Touching thy harp as the whim came on thee,
And praised and spoiled by master and by guests
Almost as much as the new dancing girl.
Why hast thou followed us ?

Callicles

The night was hot,
And the feast past its prime ; so we slipped out,
Some of us, to the portico to breathe ;—
Peisianax, thou know'st, drinks late ;—and then,
As I was lifting my soiled garland off,
I saw the mules and litter in the court,
And in the litter sate Empedocles ;
Thou, too, wast with him. Straightway I sped home ;
I saddled my white mule, and all night long
Through the cool lovely country followed you,
Passed you a little since as morning dawned,
And have this hour sate by the torrent here,
Till the slow mules should climb in sight again.
And now ?

Pausanias

Thou must be viewless to Empedocles!
Save mine, he must not meet a human eye.
One of his moods is on him that thou know'
I think, thou wouldst not vex him.

Callicles

No—ar
I would fain stay and help thee tend him! c
He knew me well, and would oft notice me
And still, I know not how, he draws me to h
And I could watch him with his proud sad f
His flowing locks and gold-encircled brow
And kingly gait, for ever, such a spell

Admits no momentary brightening now;
And when he comes among his friends at fe

He is now always moody, and I fear him;
But I would serve him, soothe him, if I coul
Dared one but try.

Pausanias

Thou wast a kind child

(But that is passed) he would have paid thy strain
With music to have drawn the stars from heaven.
He has his harp and laurel with him still,
But he has laid the use of music by,
And all which might relax his settled gloom.
Yet thou may'st try thy playing if thou wilt—
But thou must keep unseen ; follow us on,
But at a distance ; in these solitudes,
In this clear mountain-air, a voice will rise,
Though from afar, distinctly ; it may soothe him.
Play when we halt, and, when the evening comes
And I must leave him (for his pleasure is
To be left musing these soft nights alone
In the high unfrequented mountain-spots),
Then watch him, for he ranges swift and far,
Sometimes to Etna's top, and to the cone ;
But hide thee in the rocks a great way down,
And try thy noblest strains, my Callicles,
With the sweet night to help thy harmony !
Thou wilt earn my thanks sure, and perhaps his.

Callicles

More than a day and night, Pausanias,
Of this fair summer weather, on these hills,
Would I bestow to help Empedocles !
That needs no thanks ; one is far better here
Than in the broiling city in these heats.
But tell me, how hast thou persuaded him
In this his present fierce, man-hating mood,
To bring thee out with him alone on Etna ?

Pausanias

Thou hast heard all men speaking of Pantheia,
The woman who at Agrigentum lay
Thirty long days in a cold trance of death,
And whom Empedocles called back to life.
Thou art too young to note it, but his power

As of his gifted master and once friend.
He is too scornful, too high-wrought, too bitter!
'Tis not the times, 'tis not the sophists vex him;
There is some root of suffering in himself,
Some secret and unfollowed vein of woe,
Which makes the time look black and sad to him.
Pester him not in this his sombre mood
With questionings about an idle tale;
But lead him through the lovely mountain-paths,
And keep his mind from preying on itself,
And talk to him of things at hand and common,
Not miracles! thou art a learnèd man,
But credulous of fables as a girl.

Pausanias

And thou, a boy whose tongue outruns his knowledge,
And on whose lightness blame is thrown away.
,nough of this! I see the litter wind
Jp by the torrent-side, under the pines.
I must rejoin Empedocles. Do thou
Crouch in the brushwood till the mules have passed;
Then play thy kind part well. Farewell till night!

SCENE II

Noon. A Glen on the highest skirts of the woody re
of Etna

EMPEDOCLES. PAUSANIAS

Pausanias

THE noon is hot! when we have crossed the strea
We shall have left the woody tract, and come
Upon the open shoulder of the hill.
See how the giant spires of yellow bloom
Of the sun-loving gentian, in the heat,[11]

Are shining on those naked slopes like flame!
Let us rest here; and now, Empedocles,
Pantheia's history!

[*A harp-note below is heard.*

Empedocles

Hark! what sound was that
Rose from below? If it were possible,
And we were not so far from human haunt,
I should have said that some one touched a harp.
Hark! there again!

Pausanias

'Tis the boy Callicles,
The sweetest harp-player in Catana!
He is for ever coming on these hills,
In summer, to all country-festivals,
With a gay revelling band; he breaks from them
[illegible]

Empedocles

That? and to what end?

Pausanias

It is enough that [illegible]
[illegible]
were to live free from terror.

Empedocles

Spells? Mistrust them!
Mind is the spell which governs earth and heaven;

Man has a mind with which to plan his safety—
Know that, and help thyself!

Pausanias

But thy own words?
"The wit and counsel of man was never clear,
Troubles confuse the little wit he has."
Mind is a light which the Gods mock us with,
To lead those false who trust it.

[*The harp sounds ag*

Empedocles

Hist! once more!
Listen, Pausanias!—Ay, 'tis Callicles!
I know those notes among a thousand. Hark!

Callicles

(*Sings unseen, from below*)

The track winds down to the clear stream
To cross the sparkling shallows; there
The cattle love to gather, on their way
To the high mountain-pastures, and to stay,
Till the rough cow-herds drive them past,
Knee-deep in the cool ford; for 'tis the last
Of all the woody, high, well-watered dells
On Etna; and the beam
Of noon is broken there by chestnut-boughs
Down its steep verdant sides; the air
Is freshened by the leaping stream, which throws
Eternal showers of spray on the mossed roots
Of trees, and veins of turf, and long dark shoots
Of ivy-plants, and fragrant hanging bells
Of hyacinths, and on late anemonies,
That muffle its wet banks; but glade,
And stream, and sward, and chestnut-trees,
End here; Etna beyond, in the broad glare

Of the hot noon, without a shade,
Slope behind slope, up to the peak, lies bare;
The peak, round which the white clouds play.

In such a glen, on such a day,
On Pelion, on the grassy ground,
Chiron, the aged Centaur, lay,
The young Achilles standing by.
The Centaur taught him to explore
The mountains; where the glens are dry
And the tired Centaurs come to rest,
And where the soaking springs abound
.
.
.

And said · O boy, I taught this lore
To Peleus, in long distant years!
He told him of the Gods, the stars,
The tides;—and then of mortal wars,
And of the life which heroes lead
Before they reach the Elysian place
And rest in the immortal mead,
And all the wisdom of his race

The music below ceases, and EMPEDOCLES *speaks, accompanying himself in a solemn manner on his harp.*

The out-spread world to span
A cord the Gods first slung,
And then the soul of man
There, like a mirror, hung,
And bade the winds through space impel the gusty toy.

Hither and thither spins
The wind-borne, mirroring soul;

A thousand glimpses wins,
And never sees a whole;
Looks once, and drives elsewhere, and leaves its last
employ.

The Gods laugh in their sleeve
To watch man doubt and fear,
Who knows not what to believe
Since he sees nothing clear,
And dares stamp nothing false where he finds nothing
sure.

Is this, Pausanias, so?
And can our souls not strive,
But with the winds must go,
And hurry where they drive?
Is Fate indeed so strong, man's strength indeed so poor?

I will not judge! that man,
Howbeit, I judge as lost,
Whose mind allows a plan
Which would degrade it most;
And he treats doubt the best who tries to see least ill

Be not, then, fear's blind slave!
Thou art my friend; to thee,
All knowledge that I have,
All skill I wield, are free!
Ask not the latest news of the last miracle,

Ask not what days and nights
In trance Pantheia lay,
But ask how thou such sights
May'st see without dismay;
Ask what most helps when known, thou son of An

What? hate, and awe, and shame
Fill thee to see our world

His welfare his true aim ;
He errs because he dreams
The world does but exist that welfare to bestow.

We mortals are no kings
For each of whom to sway
A new-made world up-springs
Meant merely for his play ;
No, we are strangers here ; the world is from of old

In vain our pent wills fret,
And would the world subdue.
Limits we did not set
Condition all we do ;
Born into life we are, and life must be our mould !

Born into life !—man grows
Forth from his parents' stem,
And blends their bloods, as those
Of theirs are blent in them ;
So each new man strikes root into a far fore-time.

Born into life !—we bring
A bias with us here,
And, when here, each new thing
Affects us we come near ;
To tunes we did not call our being must keep chime.

Born into life !—in vain,
Opinions, those or these,
Unaltered to retain
The obstinate mind decrees ;
Experience, like a sea, soaks all-effacing in !

Born into life !—who lists
May what is false hold dear,

Man gets no other light,
Search he a thousand years.
n thyself! there ask what ails thee, at that shrine!

What makes thee struggle and rave?
Why are men ill at ease?—
'Tis that the lot they have
Fails their own will to please;
r man would make no murmuring, were his will
obeyed.

And why is it, that still
Man with his lot thus fights?—
'Tis that he makes this *will*
The measure of his *rights*,
And believes Nature outraged if his will's gainsaid.

Couldst thou, Pausanias, learn
How deep a fault is this!
Couldst thou but once discern
Thou hast no *right* to bliss,
No title from the Gods to welfare and repose;

Then thou wouldst look less mazed
Whene'er of bliss debarred,
Nor think the Gods were crazed
When thy own lot went hard.
But we are all the same—the fools of our own woes!

For, from the first faint morn
Of life, the thirst for bliss
Deep in man's heart is born!
And, sceptic as he is,
He fails not to judge clear if this be quenched or no.

Nor is that thirst to blame!
Man errs not that he deems

His welfare his true aim;
He errs because he dreams
The world does but exist that welfare to bestow.

We mortals are no kings
For each of whom to sway
A new-made world up-springs
Meant merely for his play;
No, we are strangers here; the world is from of old

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Born into life!—in vain,
Opinions, those or these,
Unaltered to retain
The obstinate mind decrees;
Experience, like a sea, soaks all-effacing in!

Born into life!—who lists
May what is false hold dear,

And for himself make mists
Through which to see less clear;
The world is what it is, for all our dust and din.

Born into life!—'tis we,
And not the world, are new;
Our cry for bliss, our plea,
Others have urged it too—
Our wants have all been felt, our errors made before.

No eye could be too sound
To observe a world so vast,
No patience too profound
To sort what's here amassed;
How man may here best live no care too great to explore

But we—as some rude guest
Would change, where'er he roam,
The manners there professed
To those he brings from home—
...e mark not the world's course, but would have *it* take *ours*.

The world's course proves the terms
On which man wins content;
Reason the proof confirms;—
We spurn it, and invent
A false course for the world, and for ourselves, false powers.

Riches we wish to get,
Yet remain spendthrifts still;
We would have health and yet
Still use our bodies ill;
Bafflers of our own prayers, from youth to life's las... scenes!

We would have inward peace,
Yet will not look within;
We would have misery cease,
Yet will not cease from sin;
We want all pleasant ends, but will use no harsh means;

We do not what we ought,
What we ought not, we do,
And lean upon the thought
That chance will bring us through;
But our own acts, for good or ill, are mightier powers!

Yet, even when man forsakes
All sin—is just, is pure,
Abandons all which makes
His welfare insecure—
Other existences there are, that clash with ours.

Like us, the lightning-fires
Love to have scope and play;
The stream, like us, desires
An unimpeded way;
Like us, the Libyan wind delights to roam at large.

Streams will not curb their pride
The just man not to entomb,
Nor lightnings go aside
To give his virtues room;
Nor is that wind less rough which blows a good man's barge.

Nature, with equal mind,
Sees all her sons at play;
Sees man control the wind,
The wind sweep man away!
Allows the proudly-riding and the foundered bark.

And, lastly, though of ours
No weakness spoil our lot,
Though the non-human powers
Of Nature harm us not,
The ill deeds of other men make often *our* life dark.

What were the wise man's plan ?—
Through this sharp, toil-set life,
To fight as best he can,
And win what's won by strife !
But we an easier way to cheat our pains have found.

Scratched by a fall, with moans
As children of weak age
Lend life to the dumb stones
Whereon to vent their rage,
And bend their little fists, and rate the senseless ground ;

So, loath to suffer mute,
We, peopling the void air,
Make Gods to whom to impute
The ills we ought to bear ;
/ith God and Fate to rail at, suffering easily.

Yet grant—as sense long missed
Things that are now perceived,
And much may still exist
Which is *not yet believed*—
rant that the world were full of Gods we cannot see !

All things the world which fill
Of but one stuff are spun,
That we who rail are still,
With what we rail at, one ;
'ne with the o'er-laboured Power that through the breadth and length

Of earth, and air, and sea,
In men, and plants, and stones,
Hath toil perpetually,
And travails, strives, and moans;
Fain would do all things well, but sometimes fails in strength!

And patiently exact
This universal God
Alike to any act
Proceeds at any nod,
And quietly declaims the cursings of himself.

This is not what man *hates*,
Yet he can curse but *this*!
Harsh Gods and hostile *Fates*
Are dreams! this only *is*;
Is everywhere; sustains the wise, the *foolish elf*.

Nor only, in the intent
To attach blame elsewhere,
Do we at will invent
Stern Powers who make their care
To embitter human life, malignant Deities;

But, next, we would reverse
The scheme ourselves have spun,
And what we made to curse
We now would lean upon,
And feign kind Gods who perfect what man vainly tries.

We mine this earthen ball,
We measure the sea-tides, we *number the sea-sands*;

We scrutinize the dates
Of long-past human things,
The bounds of effaced states,
The lines of deceased kings ;
Ve search out dead men's words, and works of dead men's hands ;

We shut our eyes, and muse
How our own minds are made,
What springs of thought they use,
How rightened, how betrayed—
And spend our wit to name what most employ unnamed.

But still, as we proceed,
The mass swells more and more
Of volumes yet to read,
Of secrets yet to explore !
Our hair grows grey, our eyes are dimmed, our heat is tamed.

We rest our faculties,
And thus address the Gods :
" True science if there is,
It stays in your abodes !
Man's measures cannot mete the immeasurable All.

" You only can take in
The world's immense design ;
Our desperate search was sin,
Which henceforth we resign,
Sure only that *your* mind sees all things which befall ! "

Fools ! that in man's brief term
He cannot all things view,
Affords no ground to affirm
That there are Gods who do !
Nor does being weary prove that he has where to rest !

Again: Our youthful blood
Claims rapture as its right;
The world, a rolling flood
Of newness and delight,
raws in the enamoured gazer to its shining breast;

Pleasure to our hot grasp
Gives flowers after flowers,
With passionate warmth we clasp
Hand after hand in ours;
Nor do we soon perceive how fast our youth is spent.

At once our eyes grow clear!
We see in blank dismay
Year posting after year,
Sense after sense decay;
Our shivering heart is mined by secret discontent!

Yet still, in spite of truth,
In spite of hopes entombed,
That longing of our youth
Burns ever unconsumed,
till hungrier for delight as delights grow more rare.

We pause, we hush our heart,
And then address the Gods.
"The world hath failed to impart
The joy our youth forebodes,
Failed to fill up the void which in our breasts we bear!

"Changeful till now, we still
Looked on to something new;
Let us, with changeless will,
Henceforth look on to you,
To find with you the joy we in vain *here* require!"

Fools! that so often here
Happiness mocked our prayer,

I think, might make us fear
A like event elsewhere!
Make us, not fly to dreams, but moderate desire!

And yet, for those who know
Themselves, who wisely take
Their way through life, and bow
To what they cannot break,
Why should I say that life need yield but *moderate* bliss?

Shall we, with temper spoiled,
Health sapped by living ill,
And judgment all embroiled
By sadness and self-will,
Shall *we* judge what for man is not true bliss or is?

Is it so small a thing
To have enjoyed the sun,
To have lived light in the spring,
To have loved, to have thought, to have done;
To have advanced true friends, and beat down baffling foes;

That we must feign a bliss
Of doubtful future date,
And, while we dream on this,
Lose all our present state,
And relegate to worlds yet distant our repose?

Not much, I know, you prize
What pleasures may be had,
Who look on life with eyes
Estranged, like mine, and sad!
And yet the village-churl feels the truth more than you,

Who's loath to leave this life
Which to him little yields,

His hard-tasked sunburnt wife,
His often-laboured fields,
The boors with whom he talked, the country-spots he
knew.

But thou, because thou hear'st
Men scoff at Heaven and Fate,
Because the Gods thou fear'st
Fail to make blest thy state,
Tremblest, and wilt not dare to trust the joys there are!

I say: Fear not! Life still
Leaves human effort scope.
But, since life teems with ill,
Nurse no extravagant hope;
Because thou must not dream, thou need'st not then
despair!

A long pause. At the end of it the notes of a harp below are again heard, and CALLICLES *sings*:—

ere

The grass is cool, the sea-side air
Buoyant and fresh, the mountain-flowers
As virginal and sweet as ours.
And there, they say, two bright and aged snakes,
Who once were Cadmus and Harmonia,

I think, might ...
A like event elsewhere!
Make us, not fly to dreams, but moderate desire!

And yet, for those who know
Themselves, who wisely take
Their way through life, and bow
To what they cannot break,
Why should I say that life need yield but *moderat*
bliss?

Shall we, with temper spoiled,
Health sapped by living ill,
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By sadness and self-will,
Shall *we* judge what for man is not true bliss or is?

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But, since life teems with ill,
Nurse no extravagant hope;
Because thou must not dream, thou need'st not then despair!

A long pause. At the end of it the notes of a harp below are again heard, and CALLICLES *sings:—*

[illegible] here
[illegible]
[illegible] sea, and in the brakes.
The grass is cool, the sea-side air
Buoyant and fresh, the mountain-flowers
As virginal and sweet as ours
And there, they say, two bright and aged snakes,
Who once were Cadmus and Harmonia,
Bask in the glens or on the warm sea-shore,
In breathless quiet, after all their ills
[illegible] place
[illegible]

There those two live, far in the Illyrian brakes!
They had stayed long enough to see,
In Thebes, the billow of calamity
Over their own dear children rolled,
Curse upon curse, pang upon pang,
For years, they sitting helpless in their home,
A grey old man and woman; yet of old
The Gods had to their marriage come,
And at the banquet all the Muses sang.

Therefore they did not end their days
In sight of blood; but were rapt, far away,
To where the west-wind plays,
And murmurs of the Adriatic come
To those untrodden mountain-lawns; and there
Placed safely in changed forms, the pair
Wholly forget their first sad life, and home,
And all that Theban woe, and stray
For ever through the glens, placid and dumb.

Empedocles

That was my harp-player again!—where is he?
Down by the stream?

Pausanias

Yes, Master, in the wood.

Empedocles

He ever loved the Theban story well!
But the day wears. Go now, Pausanias,
For I must be alone! Leave me one mule;
Take down with thee the rest to Catana.
And for young Callicles, thank him from me!
Tell him I never failed to love his lyre;
But he must follow me no more to-night.

Pausanias

Thou wilt return to-morrow to the city?

Pausanias (alone)

How his brow lightened as the
Callicles must wait here, and play to him ;
I saw him through the chestnuts far below,
Just since, down at the stream.—Ho ! Callicles !

He descends, calling.

ACT II

Evening. The Summit of Etna

Empedocles

Alone !—

And the good, learned, friendly, quiet man,
May bravelier front his life, and in himself

Find henceforth energy and heart! but I,
The weary man, the banished citizen—
Whose banishment is not his greatest ill,
Whose weariness no energy can reach,
And for whose hurt courage is not the cure—
What should I do with life and living more?
  No, thou art come too late, Empedocles!
And the world hath the day, and must break thee,
Not thou the world! With men thou canst not live,
Their thoughts, their ways, their wishes, are not thine;
And being lonely thou art miserable,
For something has impaired thy spirit's strength,
And dried its self-sufficing fount of joy.
Thou canst not live with men nor with thyself—
Oh sage! oh sage!—Take then the one way left;
And turn thee to the elements, thy friends,
Thy well-tried friends, thy willing ministers,
And say: Ye servants, hear Empedocles,
Who asks this final service at your hands!
Before the sophist-brood hath overlaid
The last spark of man's consciousness with words—
Ere quite the being of man, ere quite the world
Be disarrayed of their divinity—
Before the soul lose all her solemn joys,
And awe be dead, and hope impossible,
And the soul's deep eternal night come on—
Receive me, hide me, quench me, take me home!

He advances to the edge of the crater. Smoke and fire break forth with a loud noise, and CALLICLES *is heard below singing:—*

The lyre's voice is lovely everywhere!
In the court of Gods, in the city of men,
And in the lonely rock-strewn mountain-glen,
In the still mountain-air.

Only to Typho it sounds hatefully!
To Typho only, the rebel o'erthrown,

The curtains of the blue films slowly ...
And the white Olympus-peaks
Rosily brighten, and the soothed Gods smile
At one another from their golden chairs,
And no one round the charmèd circle speaks.
Only the loved Hebe bears
The cup about, whose draughts beguile
Pain and care, with a dark store
Of fresh-pulled violets wreathed and nodding o'er.
And her flushed feet glow on the marble floor.

Empedocles

He fables, yet speaks truth!
The brave impetuous heart yields everywhere
To the subtle, contriving head!
Great qualities are trodden down;
And littleness united
Is become invincible!

These rumblings are not Typho's groans, I know!
These angry smoke-bursts
Are not the passionate breath
Of the mountain-crushed, tortured, intractable
king!
But over all the world
What suffering is there not seen
Of plainness oppressed by cunning,
As the well-counselled Zeus oppressed
That self-helping son of earth!
What anguish of greatness,
Railed and hunted from the world,
Because its simplicity rebukes
This envious, miserable age!

I am weary of it!—
Lie there, ye ensigns
Of my unloved preëminence

The curtains of the blue films slowly meet.
And the white Olympus-peaks
Rosily brighten, and the soothed Gods smile
At one another from their golden chairs,
And no one round the charmèd circle speaks.
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I am weary of it!—
Lie there, ye ensigns
Of my unloved preëminence

Empedocles on Etna

n an age like this!
mong a people of children,
Vho thronged me in their cities,
Vho worshipped me in their houses,
nd asked, not wisdom,
But drugs to charm with,
But spells to mutter—
All the fool's-armoury of magic!—Lie there
My golden circlet!
My purple robe!

Callicles (from below)

As the sky-brightening south-wind clears
And makes the massed clouds roll,
The music of the lyre blows away
The clouds that wrap the soul.

When, from far Parnassus' side,
Young Apollo, all the pride
Of the Phrygian flutes to tame,
To the Phrygian highlands came!
Where the long green reed-beds sway
In the rippled waters grey
Of that solitary lake
Where Maeander's springs are born;
Where the ridged pine-wooded roots

And the attentive Muses said:
"Marsyas! thou art vanquished."
Then Apollo's minister
Hanged upon a branching fir
Marsyas, that unhappy Faun,
And began to whet his knife.
But the Mænads, who were there,
Left their friend, and with robes flowing
In the wind, and loose dark hair
O'er their polished bosoms blowing,
Each her ribboned tambourine
Flinging on the mountain-sod,
With a lovely frightened mien
Came about the youthful God.
But he turned his beauteous face
Haughtily another way,
From the grassy sun-warmed place
Where in proud repose he lay,
With one arm over his head,
Watching how the whetting sped.
But aloof, on the lake-strand,
Did the young Olympus stand,
Weeping at his master's end;
For the Faun had been his friend.
For he taught him how to sing,
And he taught him flute-playing.
Many a morning had they gone
To the glimmering mountain-lakes,
And had torn up by the roots
The tall crested water-reeds
With long plumes, and soft brown s
And had carved them into flutes,
Sitting on a tabled stone
Where the shoreward ripple breaks
And he taught him how to please
The red-snooded Phrygian girls,
Whom the summer evening sees
Flashing in the dance's whirls

nderneath the starlit trees
i the mountain-villages.
herefore now Olympus stands,
t his master's piteous cries
ressing fast with both his hands
'is white garment to his eyes,
'ot to see Apollo's scorn ;—
h, poor Faun, poor Faun ! ah, poor Faun !

Empedocles

l lie thou there,
laurel bough !—
rnful Apollo's ensign, lie thou there !
ough thou hast been my shade in the world's heat-
ough I have loved thee, lived in honouring thee—
t lie thou there,
laurel bough !

m weary of thee !
m weary of the solitude
here he who bears thee must abide !
the rocks of Parnassus,
the gorge of Delphi,
the moonlit peaks, and the caves.
iou guardest them, Apollo !
ver the grave of the slain Pytho,
iough young, intolerably severe !
hou keepest aloof the profane,
ut the solitude oppresses thy votary !
he jars of men reach him not in thy valley—
ut can life reach him ?
hou fencest him from the multitude—
ho will fence him from himself ?
le hears nothing but the cry of the torrents,
nd the beating of his own heart.
he air is thin, the veins swell—
he temples tighten and throb there !
ir ! air !

Take thy bough! set me free ...
I have been enough alone!

Where shall thy votary fly then? back to men?—
But they will gladly welcome him once more,
And help him to unbend his too tense thought,
And rid him of the presence of himself,
And keep their friendly chatter at his ear,
And haunt him, till the absence from himself,
That other torment, grow unbearable;
And he will fly to solitude again,
And he will find its air too keen for him,
And so change back; and many thousand times
Be miserably bandied to and fro
Like a sea-wave, betwixt the world and thee,
Thou young, implacable God! and only death
Shall cut his oscillations short, and so
Bring him to poise. There is no other way.

And yet what days were those, Parmenides!
When we were young, when we could number fri...
In all the Italian cities like ourselves,
When with elated hearts we joined your train,
Ye Sun-born Virgins! on the road of truth.[12]
Then we could still enjoy, then neither thought
Nor outward things were closed and dead to us
But we received the shock of mighty thoughts
On simple minds with a pure natural joy;
And if the sacred load oppressed our brain,
We had the power to feel the pressure eased,
The brow unbound, the thoughts flow free ag...
In the delightful commerce of the world.
We had not lost our balance then, nor grown
Thought's slaves, and dead to every natural ...
The smallest thing could give us pleasure the...
The sports of the country people,
A flute note from the woods,
Sunset over the sea!

Seed-time and harvest,

Fulness of life and power of feeling, ye
Are for the happy, for the souls at ease,
Who dwell on a firm basis of content!—
But he, who has outlived his prosperous days,
But he, whose youth fell on a different world
From that on which his exiled age is thrown,
Whose mind was fed on other food, was trained
By other rules than are in vogue to-day,
Whose habit of thought is fixed, who will not change,
But in a world he loves not must subsist
In ceaseless opposition, be the guard
Of his own breast, fettered to what he guards,

To nurse his dwindling faculty of joy—
Joy and the outward world must die to him,
As they are dead to me!

A long pause, during which EMPEDOCLES *remains motionless, plunged in thought. The night deepens. He moves forward and gazes round him, and proceeds:—*

And you, ye stars,
Who slowly begin to marshal,
As of old, in the fields of Heaven,
Your distant, melancholy lines!
Have *you*, too, survived yourselves?
?

Among august companions,
In an older world, peopled by Gods,
In a mightier order,
The radiant, rejoicing, intelligent Sons of Heaven!
But now, you kindle
Your lonely, cold-shining lights,
Unwilling lingerers
In the heavenly wilderness,
For a younger, ignoble world;
And renew, by necessity,
Night after night your courses,
In echoing unneared silence,
Above a race you know not!
Uncaring and undelighted,
Without friend and without home;
Weary like us, though not
Weary with our weariness.

No, no, ye stars! there is no death with you,
No languor, no decay! Languor and death,
They are with me, not you! ye are alive!
Ye and the pure dark ether where ye ride
Brilliant above me! And thou, fiery world,
That sapp'st the vitals of this terrible mount
Upon whose charred and quaking crust I stand—
Thou, too, brimmest with life!—the sea of cloud
That heaves its white and billowy vapours up
To moat this isle of ashes from the world,
Lives!—and that other fainter sea, far down,
O'er whose lit floor a road of moonbeams leads
To Etna's Liparëan sister-fires
And the long dusky line of Italy—
That mild and luminous floor of waters lives,
With held-in joy swelling its heart!—I only,
Whose spring of hope is dried, whose spirit has faile
I, who have not, like these, in solitude
Maintained courage and force, and in myself
Nursed an immortal vigour—I alone

Am dead to life and joy! therefore I read
In all things my own deadness.

A long silence. He continu

[illegible]

[illegible] art

[illegible]

After a paus

To the elements it came from
Everything will return.
Our bodies to earth,
Our blood to water,
Heat to fire,
Breath to air.
They were well born, they will be well entombed!
But mind? . . .

And we might gladly share the fruitful stir
Down in our mother earth's miraculous womb!

[illegible] ng air,

[illegible]

But mind—but thought—
If these have been the master part of us—

[illegible]

[illegible]
And keep us prisoners of our consciousness,

And never let us clasp and feel the All
But through their forms, and modes, and stifling veils
And we shall be unsatisfied as now;
And we shall feel the agony of thirst,
The ineffable longing for the life of life
Baffled for ever; and still thought and mind
Will hurry us with them on their homeless march,
Over the unallied unopening earth,
Over the unrecognizing sea; while air
Will blow us fiercely back to sea and earth,
And fire repel us from its living waves.
And then we shall unwillingly return
Back to this meadow of calamity,
This uncongenial place, this human life!
And in our individual human state
Go through the sad probation all again,
To see if we will poise our life at last,
To see if we will now at last be true
To our own only true, deep-buried selves,
Being one with which we are one with the whole world;
Or whether we will once more fall away
Into some bondage of the flesh or mind,
Some slough of sense, or some fantastic maze
Forged by the imperious lonely thinking-power.
And each succeeding age in which we are born
Will have more peril for us than the last;
Will goad our senses with a sharper spur,
Will fret our minds to an intenser play,
Will make ourselves harder to be discerned.
And we shall struggle awhile, gasp and rebel;
And we shall fly for refuge to past times,
Their soul of unworn youth, their breath of greatness;
And the reality will pluck us back,
Knead us in its hot hand, and change our nature!
And we shall feel our powers of effort flag,
And rally them for one last fight, and fail;
And we shall sink in the impossible strife,
And be astray for ever!

Slave of sense
are in no wise been! but slave of thought?—
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible] and gloom,
ree, disputatious, ever at war with man,
from my own soul, far from warmth and light,
t I have not grown easy in these bonds—
were!

[illegible]
histicated no truth,
rsed no delusion,
owed no fear!

[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
it in this hour! The numbing cloud
nts off my soul; I feel it, I breathe free!

t but for a moment?—
! boil up, ye vapours!
p and roar, thou sea of fire!
soul glows to meet you.
it flag, ere the mists
despondency and gloom
h over it again,
eive me! save me!

He plunges into the crate

Callicles (from below)

Through the black, rushing smoke-bursts,
Thick breaks the red flame;
All Etna heaves fiercely
Her forest-clothed frame.

Not here, O Apollo!
Are haunts meet for thee.

But, where Helicon breaks down
In cliff to the sea,

Where the moon-silvered inlets
Send far their light voice
Up the still vale of Thisbe,
O speed, and rejoice!

On the sward at the cliff-top
Lie strewn the white flocks;
On the cliff-side the pigeons
Roost deep in the rocks.

In the moonlight the shepherds,
Soft lulled by the rills,
Lie wrapt in their blankets,
Asleep on the hills.

—What forms are these coming
So white through the gloom?
What garments out-glistening
The gold-flowered broom?

What sweet-breathing presence
Out-perfumes the thyme?
What voices enrapture
The night's balmy prime?—

'Tis Apollo comes leading
His choir, the Nine.
—The leader is fairest,
But all are divine.

They are lost in the hollows!
They stream up again!
What seeks on this mountain
The glorified train?—

They bathe on this mountain,
In the spring by their road;
Then on to Olympus,
Their endless abode!

—Whose praise do they mention?
Of what is it told?—
What will be for ever;
What was from of old.

First hymn they the Father
Of all things,—and then,
The rest of immortals,
The action of men.

The day in his hotness,
The strife with the palm;
The night in her silence,
The stars in their calm.

FRAGMENT OF AN "ANTIGONE"

The Chorus

He does well too, who keeps that clue the mild
Birth-Goddess and the austere Fates first gave!

For from the day when these
Bring him, a weeping child,
First to the light, and mark
A country for him, kinsfolk, and a home,
Unguided he remains,
Till the Fates come again, alone, with death.

In little companies,
And, our own place once left,
Ignorant where to stand, or whom to avoid,
By city and household grouped, we live! and man shocks
Our order heaven-ordained
Must every day endure—
Voyages, exiles, hates, dissensions, wars!
Besides what waste *he* makes,
The all-hated, order-breaking,
Without friend, city, or home,
Death, who dissevers all.

Him then I praise, who dares
To self-selected good
Prefer obedience to the primal law,
Which consecrates the ties of blood; for these, indeed,
Are to the Gods a care!
That touches but himself!
For every day man may be linked and loosed
With strangers; but the bond
Original, deep-inwound,
Of blood, can he not bind,
Nor, if Fate binds, not bear.
But hush! Hæmon, whom Antigone,
Robbing herself of life in burying,
Against Creon's law, Polynices,
Robs of a loved bride—pale, imploring,
Waiting her passage,
Forth from the palace hitherward comes!

Fragment of an "Antigone"

Hæmon

No, no, old men, Creon I curse not!
I weep, Thebans,
One than Creon crueller far.

. . . .

Ah me!—honourest more than thy lov
O Antigone!
A dead, ignorant, thankless corpse.

The Chorus

Nor was the love untrue
Which the Dawn Goddess bore
To that fair youth she erst,
Leaving the salt sea-beds
d coming flushed over the stormy fritl
Of loud Euripus, saw—
Saw and snatched, wild with love,
From the pine-dotted spurs
Of Parnes, where thy waves,
Asopus! gleam rock-hemmed—
e Hunter of the Tanagræan Field.[12]

But him, in his sweet prime,
By severance immature,

. . . .

For she desired to make

Hæmon

But, like me, she, wroth, complaining,
Succumbed to the envy of unkind Gods;
And, her beautiful arms unclasping,
Her fair youth unwillingly gave.

The Chorus

Nor, though enthroned too high
To fear assault of envious Gods,
His beloved Argive seer would Zeus retain
From his appointed end
In this our Thebes; but when

His flying steeds came near
To cross the steep Ismenian glen,
The broad earth opened and whelmed them and
And through the void air sang
At large his enemy's spear.

And fain would Zeus have saved his tired son
Beholding him where the Two Pillars stand
O'er the sun-reddened western straits,[14]
Or at his work in that dim lower world;
Fain would he have recalled
The fraudulent oath which bound
To a much feebler wight the heroic man;

But he preferred Fate to his strong desire.
Nor did there need less than the burning pile
Under the towering Trachis crags,
And the Spercheios vale, shaken with groans,
And the roused Maliac gulph,
And scared Œtæan snows,
To achieve his son's deliverance, O my child!

RAGMENT OF CHORUS OF A "DEJANEIRA"

O FRIVOLOUS mind of man,
Light ignorance, and hurrying, unsure thoughts,
Though man bewails you not,
How *I* bewail you !

Little in your prosperity
Do you seek counsel of the Gods.
[illegible]
Unvisited remain
The great oracular shrines.

Thither in your adversity
Do you betake yourselves for light,
But strangely misinterpret all you hear
For you will not put on
New hearts with the inquirer's holy robe,
And purged, considerate minds.

And him on whom, at the end
Of toil and dolour untold,
The Gods have said that repose
At last shall descend undisturbed,
Him you expect to behold
In an easy old age, in a happy home ;
No end but this you praise.

But him, on whom, in the prime
Of life, with vigour undimmed,
With unspent mind, and a soul

Him, I count *him*, well-starred.

PHILOMELA

Hark! ah, the nightingale!
The tawny-throated!
Hark! from that moonlit cedar what a burst!
What triumph! hark—what pain!

[W]anderer from a Grecian shore,
[Stil]l, after many years, in distant lands,
[Sti]ll nourishing in thy bewildered brain
[Th]at wild, unquenched, deep-sunken, old-world pa[in]—
[S]ay, will it never heal?
And can this fragrant lawn
With its cool trees, and night,
And the sweet, tranquil Thames,
And moonshine, and the dew,
To thy racked heart and brain
Afford no balm?

Dost thou to-night behold,
Here, through the moonlight on this English grass,
The unfriendly palace in the Thracian wild?
Dost thou again peruse
With hot cheeks and seared eyes
The too clear web, and thy dumb sister's shame?
Dost thou once more assay
Thy flight, and feel come over thee,
Poor fugitive, the feathery change
Once more, and once more seem to make resound
With love and hate, triumph and agony,
Lone Daulis, and the high Cephissian vale?
Listen, Eugenia—
How thick the bursts come crowding through the lea[ves]!
Again—thou hearest?
Eternal passion!
Eternal pain!

EARLY DEATH AND FAME

a avoids
vy, strife,
Stupid detraction, jealousy, cabal,
Insincere praises ; which descends
The quiet mossy track to age.

But, when immature death
Beckons too early the guest
From the half-tried banquet of life,
Young, in the bloom of his days ;
Leaves no leisure to press,
Slow and surely, the sweets
Of a tranquil life in the shade—
Fuller for him be the hours !

Triple his pulses with fame !

BACCHANALIA
OR
THE NEW AGE

I

Silent the swaths ! the ringing wain,

The mower's cry, the dog's alarms,
All housed within the sleeping farms!
The business of the day is done,
The last-left haymaker is gone.
And from the thyme upon the height,
And from the elder-blossom white
And pale dog-roses in the hedge,
And from the mint-plant in the sedge,
In puffs of balm the night-air blows
The perfume which the day forgoes.
And on the pure horizon far,
See, pulsing with the first-born star,
The liquid sky above the hill!
The evening comes, the field is still.

Loitering and leaping,
With saunter, with bounds—
Flickering and circling
In files and in rounds—
Gaily their pine-staff green
Tossing in air,
Loose o'er their shoulders white
Showering their hair—
See! the wild Mænads
Break from the wood,
Youth and Iacchus
Maddening their blood!
See! through the quiet land
Rioting they pass—
Fling the fresh heaps about,
Trample the grass!
Tear from the rifled hedge
Garlands, their prize;
Fill with their sports the field,
Fill with their cries!

Shepherd, what ails thee, then?
Shepherd, why mute?

Forth with thy joyous song!
Forth with thy flute!
Tempts not the revel blithe?
Lure not their cries?
Glow not their shoulders smooth
Melt not their eyes?
Is not, on cheeks like those,
Lovely the flush?
—Ah, so the quiet was!
So was the hush!

II

The epoch ends, the world is still.
The age has talked and worked its fill—
The famous orators have shone,
The famous poets sung and gone,
The famous men of war have fought,
The famous speculators thought,
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
Uphung the spear, unbent the bow,
The puissant crowned, the weak laid low!
And in the after-silence sweet,
Now strife is hushed, our ears doth meet,
Ascending pure, the bell-like fame
Of this or that down-trodden name,
Delicate spirits, pushed away
In the hot press of the noon-day.
And o'er the plain, where the dead age
Did its now silent warfare wage—
O'er that wide plain, now wrapt in gloom

Rise slowly up into the sky
To shine there everlastingly,
Like stars over the bounding hill.
The epoch ends, the world is still.

Thundering and bursting
In torrents, in waves—
Carolling and shouting
Over tombs, amid graves—
See! on the cumbered plain
Clearing a stage,
Scattering the past about,
Comes the new age!
Bards make new poems,
Thinkers new schools,
Statesmen new systems,
Critics new rules!
All things begin again;
Life is their prize;
Earth with their deeds they fill,
Fill with their cries!

Poet, what ails thee, then?
Say, why so mute?
Forth with thy praising voice!
Forth with thy flute!
Loiterer! why sittest thou
Sunk in thy dream?
Tempts not the bright new age?
Shines not its stream?
Look, ah, what genius,
Art, science, wit!
Soldiers like Cæsar,
Statesmen like Pitt!
Sculptors like Phidias,
Raphaels in shoals,
Poets like Shakspeare—

See, on their glowing cheeks
Heavenly the flush !
—Ah, so the silence was !
So was the hush !

The world but feels the present's spell,
The poet feels the past as well ;
Whatever men have done, might do,
Whatever thought, might think it too.

SWITZERLAND

1. *A Memory-Picture*

Young, I said : " A face is gone
If too hotly mused upon ;
And our best impressions are
Those that do themselves repair."
Many a face I then let flee,
Ah, is faded utterly !
  Ere the parting hour go by,
  Quick, thy tablets, Memory !

Marguerite says " As last year went
So the coming year'll be spent !
Some day next year, I shall be,
Entering heedless, kissed by thee."
Ah ! I hope—yet, once away,
What may chain us, who can say ?
  Ere the parting hour go by,
  Quick, thy tablets, Memory !

Paint that lilac kerchief, bound
Her soft face, her hair around ;
Tied under the archest chin
Mockery ever ambushed in !

Let the fluttering fringes streak
All her pale, sweet-rounded cheek!
   Ere the parting hour go by,
   Quick, thy tablets, Memory!

Paint that figure's pliant grace
As she toward me leaned her face,
Half refused and half resigned,
Murmuring: "Art thou still unkind?"
Many a broken promise then
Was new made—to break again.
   Ere the parting hour go by,
   Quick, thy tablets, Memory!

Paint those eyes, so blue, so kind,
Eager tell-tales of her mind!
Paint, with their impetuous stress
Of inquiring tenderness,
Those frank eyes, where deep doth lie
An angelic gravity!
   Ere the parting hour go by,
   Quick, thy tablets, Memory!

What, my friends, these feeble lines
Show, you say, my love declines?
To paint ill as I have done,
Proves forgetfulness begun?
Time's gay minions, pleased you see,
Time, your master, governs me;
   Pleased, you mock the fruitless cry:
   "Quick, thy tablets, Memory!"

Ah, too true! Time's current strong
Leaves us firm to nothing long.
Yet, if little stays with man,
Ah, retain we all we can!
If the clear impression dies,
Ah! the dim remembrance prize!

Ere the parting hour go by,
Quick, thy tablets, Memory!

2. *Meeting*

Again I see my bliss at hand!
The town, the lake are here.
My Marguerite smiles upon the strand
Unaltered with the year.

I know that graceful figure fair,
That cheek of languid hue;
I know that soft enkerchiefed hair,
And those sweet eyes of blue.

Again I spring to make my choice;

Ye guiding Powers who join and part,
What would ye have with me?
Ah, warn some more ambitious heart,
And let the peaceful be!

3. *Parting*

Ye storm-winds of Autumn!
Who rush by, who shake
The window, and ruffle
The gleam-lighted lake;
Who cross to the hill-side
Thin-sprinkled with farms,
Where the high woods strip sadly
Their yellowing arms;—
Ye are bound for the mountains!

Ah, with you let me go
Where your cold distant barrier,
The vast range of snow,
Through the loose clouds lifts dimly
Its white peaks in air—
How deep is their stillness!
Ah! would I were there!

But on the stairs what voice is this I hear,
Buoyant as morning, and as morning clear?
Say, has some wet bird-haunted English lawn
Lent it the music of its trees at dawn?
Or was it from some sun-flecked mountain-brook
That the sweet voice its upland clearness took?
Ah! it comes nearer—
Sweet notes, this way!

Hark! fast by the window
The rushing winds go,
To the ice-cumbered gorges,
The vast seas of snow.
There the torrents drive upward
Their rock-strangled hum,
There the avalanche thunders
The hoarse torrent dumb.
—I come, O ye mountains!
Ye torrents, I come!

But who is this, by the half-opened door,
Whose figure casts a shadow on the floor?
The sweet blue eyes—the soft, ash-coloured hai
The cheeks that still their gentle paleness wear-
The lovely lips, with their arch smile that tells
The unconquered joy in which her spirit dwells
Ah! they bend nearer—

Switzerland

Hark ! the wind rushes past us—
Ah ! with that let me go
To the clear waning hill-side
Unspotted by snow,
[illegible] to watch, o'er the sunk vale, [illegible]
[illegible]
Its [illegible]
There its dusky blue [illegible]
The aconite spreads ;
There the pines slope, the cloud-strips
Hung soft in their heads !
No life but, at moments,
The mountain-bee's hum
—I come, O ye mountains !
Ye pine-woods, I come !

Forgive me ! forgive me !
  Ah, Marguerite, fain
Would these arms reach to clasp thee !—
  But see ! 'tis in vain.

In the void air towards thee
  My strained arms are cast ;
But a sea rolls between us—
  Our different past !

To the lips, ah ! of others,
  Those lips have been prest,
And others, ere I was,
  Were clasped to that breast ;

Far, far from each other
  Our spirits have grown ;
And what heart knows another ?
  Ah ! who knows his own ?

Blow, ye winds! lift me with you!
  I come to the wild.
Fold closely, O Nature!
  Thine arms round thy child.

To thee only God granted
  A heart ever new—
To all always open,
  To all always true.

Ah, calm me! restore me!
  And dry up my tears
On thy high mountain platforms,
  Where morn first appears,

Where the white mists, for ever,
  Are spread and upfurled;
In the stir of the forces
  Whence issued the world.

4. *A Farewell*

My horse's feet beside the lake,
Where sweet the unbroken moonbeams lay,
Sent echoes through the night to wake
Each glistening strand, each heath-fringed bay

The poplar avenue was passed,
And the roofed bridge that spans the stream.
Up the steep street I hurried fast,
Led by thy taper's starlike beam.

I came! I saw thee rise!—the blood
Poured flushing to thy languid cheek.
Locked in each other's arms we stood,

Days flew ;—ah, soon I could discern
A trouble in thine altered air !
Thy hand lay languidly in mine,
Thy cheek was grave, thy speech grew rare.

I blame thee not !—this heart, I know,
To be long loved was never framed ;
For something in its depths doth glow
Too strange, too restless, too untamed.

[illegible]
[illegible]
They seek [illegible]
Stern strength, and promise of control.

They ask not kindness, gentle ways ;
These they themselves have tried and known.
They ask a soul which never sways
With the blind gusts that shake their own.

I too have felt the load I bore
In a too strong emotion's sway ;
I too have wished, no woman more,
This starting, feverish, heart away.

I too have longed for trenchant force
And will like a dividing spear ,
Have praised the keen, unscrupulous course,
Which knows no doubt, which feels no fear.

But in the world I learnt, what there
Thou too wilt surely one day prove,
That will, that energy, though rare,
Are yet far, far less rare than love !

Go then ! till time and fate impress
This truth on thee, be mine no more !

They will!—for thou, I feel, no less
Than I, wast destined to this lore.

We school our manners, act our parts—
But He, who sees us through and through,
Knows that the bent of both our hearts
Was to be gentle, tranquil, true.

And though we wear out life, alas!
Distracted as a homeless wind,
In beating where we must not pass,
In seeking what we shall not find;

Yet we shall one day gain, life past,
Clear prospect o'er our being's whole;
Shall see ourselves, and learn at last
Our true affinities of soul.

We shall not then deny a course
To every thought the mass ignore;
We shall not then call hardness force,
Nor lightness wisdom any more.

Then, in the eternal Father's smile,
Our soothed, encouraged souls will dare
To *seem* as free from pride and guile,
As good, as generous, as they *are*.

Then we shall know our friends! though much
Will have been lost—the help in strife,
The thousand sweet, still joys, of such
As hand in hand face earthly life—

Though these be lost, there will be yet
A sympathy august and pure;
Ennobled by a vast regret,
And by contrition sealed thrice sure.

And we, whose ways were unlike here,
May then more neighbouring courses ply;
May to each other be brought near
And greet across infinity.

How sweet, unreached by earthly jars,
My sister! to behold with thee
The hush among the shining stars,
The calm upon the moonlit sea!

How sweet to feel, on the boon air,
All our unquiet pulses cease!
To feel that nothing can impair
The gentleness, the thirst for peace—

The gentleness too rudely hurled
On this wild earth of hate and fear;
The thirst for peace a raving world
Would never let us satiate here.

5. *Absence*

In this fair stranger's eyes of grey
Thine eyes, my love! I see.
I shudder! for the passing day
Had borne me far from thee.

This is the curse of life! that not
A nobler, calmer train
Of wiser thoughts and feelings blot
Our passions from our brain;

But each day brings its petty dust
Our soon-choked souls to fill,
And we forget because we must,
And not because we will.

struggle towards the light ; and ye,
ɪnce-longed-for storms of love !
f with the light ye cannot be,
bear that ye remove.

struggle towards the light—but oh,
Vhile yet the night is chill,
Jpon time's barren, stormy flow,
ʲtay with me, Marguerite, still !

6. *Isolation. To Marguerite*

ʌVe were apart ! yet, day by day,
. bade my heart more constant be ;
| bade it keep the world away,
ʌnd grow a home for only thee ;
Nor feared but thy love likewise grew,
ʟike mine, each day more tried, more true.

Ƭhe fault was grave ! I might have known,
What far too soon, alas, I learned—
Ƭhe heart can bind itself alone,
And faith is often unreturned.
Self-swayed our feelings ebb and swell !
Thou lov'st no more ;—Farewell ! Farewell !

Farewell !—and thou, thou lonely heart,
Which never yet without remorse
Even for a moment didst depart
From thy remote and spherèd course
To haunt the place where passions reign—
Back to thy solitude again !

Back ! with the conscious thrill of shame
Which Luna felt, that summer night,
Flash through her pure immortal frame,
[illegible]

To hang over Endymion's sleep
Upon the pine-grown Latmian steep—

Yet she, chaste queen, had never proved
How vain a thing is mortal love,

Or, if not quite alone, yet they
Which touch thee are unmating things—
Ocean and clouds and night and day;
Lorn autumns and triumphant springs;
And life, and others' joy and pain,
And love, if love, of happier men.

Of happier men!—for they, at least,
Have dreamed two human hearts might blend
In one, and were through faith released
From isolation without end
Prolonged; nor knew, although not less
Alone than thou, their loneliness!

7. *To Marguerite. Continued*

YES! in the sea of life enisled,

The islands feel the enclasping flow,
And then their endless bounds they know.

But when the moon their hollows lights,
And they are swept by balms of spring,
And in their glens, on starry nights,
The nightingales divinely sing;

Oh! then a longing like despair
Is to their farthest caverns sent;
For surely once, they feel, we were
Parts of a single continent!
Now round us spreads the watery plain—
Oh might our marges meet again!

Who ordered, that their longing's fire
Should be, as soon as kindled, cooled?
Who renders vain their deep desire?—
A God, a God their severance ruled!
And bade betwixt their shores to be
The unplumbed, salt, estranging sea.

8. *The Terrace at Berne*

(COMPOSED TEN YEARS AFTER THE PRECEDING)

TEN years!—and to my waking eye
Once more the roofs of Berne appear;
The rocky banks, the terrace high,
The stream!—and do I linger here?

The clouds are on the Oberland,
The Jungfrau snows look faint and far;
But bright are those green fields at hand,
And through those fields comes down the Aar,

And from the blue twin-lakes it comes,
Flows by the town, the church-yard fair;
And 'neath the garden-walk it hums,
The house!—and is my Marguerite there?

Ah, shall I see thee, while a flush
Of startled pleasure floods thy brow,

Quick through the oleanders brush,
And clap thy hands, and cry: *'Tis thou!*

Or hast thou long since wandered back,
Daughter of France! to France, thy home;
And flitted down the flowery track
Where feet like thine too lightly come?

Doth riotous laughter now replace
Thy smile, and rouge, with stony glare,
Thy cheek's soft hue, and fluttering lace
The kerchief that enwound thy hair?

Or is it over?—art thou dead?—
Dead!—and no warning shiver ran
Across my heart, to say thy thread
Of life was cut, and closed thy span!

Could from earth's ways that figure slight
Be lost, and I not feel 'twas so?
Of that fresh voice the gay delight
Fail from earth's air and I not know?

Or shall I find thee still, but changed,
But not the Marguerite of thy prime?
With all thy being re-arranged
Passed through the crucible of time;

With spirit vanished, beauty waned,
And hardly yet a glance, a tone,
A gesture—anything—retained
Of all that was my Marguerite's own?

I will not know!—for wherefore try
To things by mortal course that live
A shadowy durability,
For which they were not meant, to give?

And lovely notes, from shore to shore,
Across the sounds and channels pour—

Oh! then a longing like despair
Is to their farthest caverns sent;
For surely once, they feel, we were
Parts of a single continent!
Now round us spreads the watery plain—
Oh might our marges meet again!

Who ordered, that their longing's fire
Should be, as soon as kindled, cooled?
Who renders vain their deep desire?—
A God, a God their severance ruled!
And bade betwixt their shores to be
The unplumbed, salt, estranging sea.

8. *The Terrace at Berne*

(COMPOSED TEN YEARS AFTER THE PRECEDING)

TEN years!—and to my waking eye
Once more the roofs of Berne appear;
The rocky banks, the terrace high,
The stream!—and do I linger here?

The clouds are on the Oberland,
The Jungfrau snows look faint and far;
But bright are those green fields at hand,
And through those fields comes down the Aar,

And from the blue twin-lakes it comes,
Flows by the town, the church-yard fair;
And 'neath the garden-walk it hums,
The house!—and is my Marguerite there?

Ah, shall I see thee, while a flush
Of startled pleasure floods thy brow,

Quick through the oleanders brush,
And clap thy hands, and cry: *'Tis thou!*

Or !
Dai
Anu ......
Where feet like thine too lightly come

Doth riotous laughter now replace
Thy smile, and rouge, with stony glare,
Thy cheek's soft hue, and fluttering lace
The kerchief that enwound thy hair?

Or is it over?—art thou dead?—
Dead!—and no warning shiver ran
Across my heart, to say thy thread
Of life was cut, and closed thy span!

Could from earth's ways that figure slight

ow?

Or sha
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Passed

With spirit vanished, beauty waned,
And hardly yet a glance, a tone,
A gesture—anything—retained
Of all that was my Marguerite's own?

I will not know!—for wherefore try
To things by mortal course that live
A shadowy durability,
For which they were not meant, to gi

Like driftwood spars which meet and pass
Upon the boundless ocean-plain,
So on the sea of life, alas!
Man nears man, meets, and leaves again.

I knew it when my life was young!
I feel it still, now youth is o'er!
The mists are on the mountains hung,
And Marguerite I shall see no more.

URANIA

She smiles and smiles, and will not sigh,
While we for hopeless passion die;
Yet she could love, those eyes declare,
Were but men nobler than they are.

Eagerly once her gracious ken
Was turned upon the sons of men;
But light the serious visage grew—
She looked, and smiled, and saw them through!

Our petty souls, our strutting wits,
Our laboured, puny passion-fits—
Ah, may she scorn them still, till we
Scorn them as bitterly as she!

Yet show her once, ye heavenly Powers,
One of some worthier race than ours!
One for whose sake she once might prove
How deeply she who scorns can love.

His eyes be like the starry lights—
[illegible] voice l[illegible] sounds of summer nights—
[illegible] his l[illegible] mien let pierce
[illegible] iverse!

And she to him will reach her hand,
And gazing in his eyes will stand,
And know her friend, and weep for glee,
And cry: *Long, long I've looked for thee.*

Then will she weep!—with smiles, till then,
Coldly she mocks the sons of men.
Till then her lovely eyes maintain
Their pure, unwavering, deep disdain.

EUPHROSYNE

I WILL not say that thou wast true,
Yet let me say that thou wast fair!
And they that lovely face who view,
They should not ask if truth be there.

Truth—what is truth? Two bleeding hearts
Wounded by men, by Fortune tried,
Outwearied with their lonely parts,
Vow to beat henceforth side by side.

The world to them was stern and drear,
Their lot was but to weep and moan;
Ah, let them keep their faith sincere,
For neither could subsist alone!

But souls whom some benignant breath
Has charmed at birth from gloom and care,
These ask no love, these plight no faith,
For they are happy as they are.

The world to them may homage make,
And garlands for their forehead weave;
And what the world can give, they take—
But they bring more than they rec

They smile upon the world! their ears
To one demand alone are coy;
They will not give us love and tears—
They bring us light, and warmth, and joy.

On one she smiled, and he was blest!
She smiles elsewhere—we make a din!
But 'twas not love which heaved her breast,
Fair child!—it was the bliss within.

CALAIS SANDS

A thousand knights have reined their steeds
To watch this line of sand-hills run,
Along the never-silent strait,
To Calais glittering in the sun.

To look toward Ardres' Golden Field
Across this wide aërial plain,
Which glows as if the Middle Age
Were gorgeous upon earth again.

Oh, that to share this famous scene
I saw, upon the open sand,
Thy lovely presence at my side,
Thy shawl, thy look, thy smile, thy hand!

How exquisite thy voice would come,
My darling, on this lonely air!
How sweetly would the fresh sea-breeze
Shake loose some lock of soft brown hair!

But now my glance but once hath roved
O'er Calais and its famous plain;
To England's cliffs my gaze is turned,
O'er the blue strait mine eyes I strain.

[illegible]

I must not spring to grasp thy hand,
To woo thy smile, to seek thine eye ;
But I may stand far off, and gaze,
And watch thee pass unconscious by,

And spell thy looks, and guess thy thoughts,
Mixt with the idlers on the pier ;—
Ah, might I always rest unseen,
So I might have thee always near !

To-morrow hurry through the fields
Of Flanders to the storied Rhine !
To-night those soft-fringed eyes shall close
Beneath one roof, my queen ! with mine.

DOVER BEACH

The sea is calm to-night,
The tide is full, the moon lies fair
Upon the straits ;—on the French coast, the light
Gleams, and is gone ; the cliffs of England stand
Glimmering and vast, out in the tranquil bay.
Come to the window, sweet is the night air !
Only, from the long line of spray
Where the ebb meets the moon-blanched sand,
Listen ! you hear the grating roar
Of pebbles which the waves draw back, and fling
At their return, up the high strand,
Begin, and cease, and then again begin,
With tremulous cadence slow, and bring
The eternal note of sadness in.

Sophocles long ago
Heard it on the Ægæan, and it brought
Into his mind the turbid ebb and flow
Of human misery; we
Find also in the sound a thought,
Hearing it by this distant northern sea.

The Sea of Faith
Was once, too, at the full, and round earth's shore
Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furled;
But now I only hear
Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar,
Retreating to the breath
Of the night-wind down the vast edges drear
And naked shingles of the world.

Ah, love, let us be true
To one another! for the world, which seems
To lie before us like a land of dreams,
So various, so beautiful, so new,
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain;
And we are here as on a darkling plain
Swept with confused alarms of struggle and fight,
Where ignorant armies clash by night!

THE BURIED LIFE

Light flows our war of mocking words, and yet,
Behold, with tears mine eyes are wet!
I feel a nameless sadness o'er me roll.
Yes, yes, we know that we can jest,
We know, we know that we can smile!
But there's a something in this breast
To which thy light words bring no rest,
And thy gay smiles no anodyne;
Give me thy hand, and hush awhile,

And turn those limpid eyes on mine,
And let me read there, love, thy inmost soul!

Alas, is even love too weak
To unlock the heart, and let it speak?
Are even lovers powerless to reveal
To one another what indeed they feel?
I knew the mass of men concealed
Their thoughts, for fear that if revealed
They would by other men be met
With blank indifference, or with blame reprove
I knew they lived and moved
Tricked in disguises, alien to the rest
Of men, and alien to themselves!—and yet
The same heart beats in every human breast.

But we, my love—doth a like spell benumb
Our hearts?—our voices?—must we too be dumb?

Ah! well for us, if even we,
[illegible]
[illegible] p ordained!
[illegible]

Pursue with indiscernible flow its way;
And that we should not see
The buried stream, and seem to be
Eddying at large in blind uncertainty,
Though driving on with it eternally.

But often, in the world's most crowded streets,
But often, in the din of strife,
There rises an unspeakable desire
After the knowledge of our buried life,
A thirst to spend our fire and restless force
In tracking out our true, original course ;
A longing to inquire
Into the mystery of this heart which beats
So wild, so deep in us,—to know
Whence our thoughts come and where they go.
And many a man in his own breast then delves,
But deep enough, alas, none ever mines !
And we have been on many thousand lines,
And we have shown, on each, spirit and power ;
But hardly have we, for one little hour,
Been on our own line, have we been ourselves !
Hardly had skill to utter one of all
The nameless feelings that course through our breast,
But they course on for ever unexpressed !
And long we try in vain to speak and act
Our hidden self, and what we say and do
Is eloquent, is well—but 'tis not true !
And then we will no more be racked
With inward striving, and demand
Of all the thousand nothings of the hour
Their stupefying power ;
Ah yes, and they benumb us at our call !
Yet still, from time to time, vague and forlorn,
From the soul's subterranean depth upborne
As from an infinitely distant land,
Come airs, and floating echoes, and convey
A melancholy into all our day.

Only, but this is rare !
When a belovèd hand is laid in ours,
When, jaded with the rush and glare
Of the interminable hours,
Our eyes can in another's eyes read clear,

When our world-deafened ear
Is by the tones of a loved voice caressed—
A bolt is shot back somewhere in our breast,
And a lost pulse of feeling stirs again.
The eye sinks inward, and the heart lies plain,
And what we mean, we say, and what we wou
know!
A man becomes aware of his life's flow,
And hears its winding murmur, and he sees
The meadows where it glides, the sun, the breeze.

And there arrives a lull in the hot race
Wherein he doth for ever chase
That flying and elusive shadow, rest.
An air of coolness plays upon his face,
And an unwonted calm pervades his breast.
And then he thinks he knows
The hills where his life rose,
And the sea where it goes.

SONNETS

1. *Quiet Work*

One lesson, Nature, let me learn of thee,
One lesson, which in every wind is blown,
One lesson of two duties kept at one,
Though the loud world proclaim their enmity—

Of toil unsevered from tranquillity!
Of labour, that in lasting fruit outgrows
Far noisier schemes, accomplished in repose—
Too great for haste, too high for rivalry!

Yes, while on earth a thousand discords ring,
Man's senseless uproar mingling with his toil,
Still do thy quiet ministers move on

Their glorious tasks in silence perfecting!
Still working, blaming still our vain turmoil,
Labourers that shall not fail, when man is gone.

2. *To a Friend*

Who prop, thou ask'st, in these bad days, my min
He much, the old man, who, clearest-souled of me
Saw The Wide Prospect, and the Asian Fen,[15]
And Tmolus hill, and Smyrna bay, though blind.

Much he, whose friendship I not long since won,
That halting slave, who in Nicopolis
Taught Arrian, when Vespasian's brutal son
Cleared Rome of what most shamed him. But

My special thanks, whose even-balanced soul,
From first youth tested up to extreme old age,
Business could not make dull, nor passion wild:

Who saw life steadily, and saw it whole ·
The mellow glory of the Attic stage,
Singer of sweet Colonus, and its child.

3. *Human Limits*

ON SEEING GEORGE CRUIKSHANK'S PICTUR
"THE BOTTLE," IN THE COUNTRY

Artist! whose hand, with horror winged, hat
From the rank life of towns this leaf; and flur
The prodigy of full-blown crime among
Valleys and men to middle fortune born.

Not innocent, indeed, yet not forlorn;
Say, what shall calm us, when such guests int

Like comets on the heavenly solitude?
Shall breathless glades cheered by shy Dian's horn,

[illegible] The soul
[illegible]cely, says:
Why [illegible] nan

"May be by man effaced; man can control
To pain, to death, the bent of his own days.
Know thou the worst! So much, not more, he *can*."

4. *To a Republican Friend, 1848*

God knows it, I am with you! If to prize
Those virtues, prized and practised by too few,
But prized, but loved, but eminent in you,
Man's fundamental life; if to despise

The barren optimistic sophistries
Of comfortable moles, whom what they do
Teaches the limit of the just and true
(And for such doing they require no eyes);

If sadness at the long heart-wasting show
Wherein earth's great ones are disquieted;
If thoughts, not idle, while before me flow

The armies of the homeless and unfed—
If these are yours, if this is what you are,
Then am I yours, and what you feel, I share.

5. *Continued*

Yet, when I muse on what life is, I seem
Rather to patience prompted, than that proud

Prospect of hope which France proclaims so loud—
France, famed in all great arts, in none supreme!

Seeing this vale, this earth, whereon we dream,
Is on all sides o'ershadowed by the high
Uno'erleaped mountains of necessity,
Sparing us narrower margin than we deem.

Nor will that day dawn at a human nod,
When, bursting through the network superposed
By selfish occupation—plot and plan,

Lust, avarice, envy—liberated man,
All difference with his fellow-mortal closed,
Shall be left standing face to face with God.

6. *East London*

'Twas August, and the fierce sun overhead
Smote on the squalid streets of Bethnal Green,
And the pale weaver, through his windows seen
In Spitalfields, looked thrice dispirited;

I met a preacher there I knew, and said:
"Ill and o'erworked, how fare you in this scene?"
"Bravely!" said he; "for I of late have been
Much cheered with thoughts of Christ, *the living bread.*"

O human soul! as long as thou canst so
Set up a mark of everlasting light,
Above the howling senses' ebb and flow,

To cheer thee, and to right thee if thou roam,
Not with lost toil thou labourest through the night!
Thou mak'st the heaven thou hop'st indeed thy home.

7. *West London*

CROUCHED on the pavement, close by Belgrave Square,
A tramp I saw, ill, moody, and tongue-tied;
A babe was in her arms, and at her side
A girl; their clothes were rags, their feet were bare.

[illegible] ere there,
[illegible] ied
[illegible] —
[illegible]

Thought I: "Above her state this spirit towers;
She will not ask of aliens, but of friends,
Of sharers in a common human fate.

"She turns from that cold succour, which attends
The unknown little from the unknowing great,
And points us to a better time than ours"

8. *Worldly Place*

EVEN in a palace, life may be led well!
So spoke the imperial sage, purest of men,
Marcus Aurelius.—But the stifling den
Of common life, where, crowded up pell-mell,

Our freedom for a little bread we sell,
And drudge under some foolish master's ken,
Who rates us, if we peer outside our pen—
Matched with a palace, is not this a hell?

Even in a palace! On his truth sincere,
Who spoke these words, no shadow ever came
And when my ill-schooled spirit is aflame

Some nobler, ampler stage of life to win,
I'll stop, and say: " There were no succour here!
The aids to noble life are all within."

9. *Austerity of Poetry*

THAT son of Italy who tried to blow,[16]
Ere Dante came, the trump of sacred song,
In his light youth amid a festal throng
Sate with his bride to see a public show.

Fair was the bride, and on her front did glow
Youth like a star; and what to youth belong,
Gay raiment, sparkling gauds, elation strong
A prop gave way! crash fell a platform! lo,

Mid struggling sufferers, hurt to death, she lay!
Shuddering, they drew her garments off—and found
A robe of sackcloth next the smooth, white skin.

Such, poets, is your bride, the Muse! young, gay,
Radiant, adorned outside; a hidden ground
Of thought and of austerity within.

10. *Religious Isolation*

TO A FRIEND

CHILDREN (as such forgive them!) have I known
Ever in their own eager pastime bent
To make the incurious bystander, intent
On his own swarming thoughts, an interest own

Too fearful or too fond to play alone.
Do thou, whom light in thine own inmost soul

trol
m!

(Not less
Wishes u

What though the holy secret which moulds thee
Moulds not the solid earth? though never winds
Have whispered it to the complaining sea,

Nature's great law, and law of all men's minds?—
To its own impulse every creature stirs;
Live by thy light, and earth will live by hers!

11. *East and West*

. Anglesey they show
play,
they say,
And, Thirte ters flow.
"Two saints met often where

"One came from Penmon, westward, and a glow
Whitened his face from the sun's fronting ray;
Eastward the other, from the dying day—
And he with unsunned face did always go."

Seiriol the Bright, Kybi the Dark! men said.
The seër from the East was then in light,
The seër from the West was then in shade

Ah! now 'tis changed In conquering sunshi
The man of the bold West now comes arrayed
He of the mystic East is touched with night.

12. *The Better Part*

Long fed on boundless hopes, O race of mar
How angrily thou spurn'st all simpler fare!

" Christ," some one says, " was human as we are.
No judge eyes us from Heaven, our sin to scan.

" We live no more, when we have done our span."—
" Well, then, for Christ," thou answerest, " who can care?
From sin, which Heaven records not, why forbear?
Live we like brutes our life without a plan!"

So answerest thou; but why not rather say:
" Hath man no second life?—*Pitch this one high!*
Sits there no judge in Heaven, our sin to see?—

" *More strictly, then, the inward judge obey!*
Was Christ a man like us?—*Ah! let us try*
If we then, too, can be such men as he!"

13. *The Good Shepherd with the Kid*

He saves the sheep, the goats he doth not save!
So rang Tertullian's sentence, on the side
Of that unpitying Phrygian sect which cried:[17]
" Him can no fount of fresh forgiveness lave,

" Who sins, once washed by the baptismal wave!"
So spake the fierce Tertullian. But she sighed,
The infant Church! of love she felt the tide
Stream on her from her Lord's yet recent grave.

And then she smiled; and in the Catacombs,
With eye suffused but heart inspirèd true,
On those walls subterranean, where she hid

Her head in ignominy, death, and tombs,
She her Good Shepherd's hasty image drew—
And on his shoulders, not a lamb, a kid.

14. *The Divinity*

"Yes, write it in the rock," Saint Bernard said,
"Grave it on brass with adamantine pen!
'Tis God himself becomes apparent, when
God's wisdom and God's goodness are displayed,

"For God of these his attributes is made."—
Well spake the impetuous Saint, and bore of men
The suffrage captive; now, not one in ten
:calls the obscure opposer he outweighed.[18]

›d's *wisdom* and *God's goodness!*—Ay, but fools
is-define these till God knows them no more.
Visdom and goodness, they are God!—what schools

Have yet so much as heard this simpler lore?
This no Saint preaches, and this no Church rules;
'Tis in the desert, now and heretofore.

15 *Immortality*

Foiled by our fellow-men, depressed, outworn,
We leave the brutal world to take its way,
And, *Patience! in another life*, we say,
The world shall be thrust down, and we up-borne!

And will not, then, the immortal armies scorn
The world's poor, routed leavings? or will they,
Who failed under the heat of this life's day,
Support the fervours of the heavenly morn?

No, no! the energy of life may be
Kept on after the grave, but not begun!
And he who flagged not in the earthly strife,

From strength to strength advancing—only he,
His soul well-knit, and all his battles won,
Mounts, and that hardly, to eternal life.

16. *Monica's Last Prayer* [10]

" Oh could thy grave at home, at Carthage, be ! "—
Care not for that, and lay me where I fall !
Everywhere heard will be the judgment-call.
But at God's altar, oh ! remember me.

Thus Monica, and died in Italy.
Yet fervent had her longing been, through all
Her course, for home at last, and burial
With her own husband, by the Libyan sea.

Had been ! but at the end, to her pure soul
All tie with all beside seemed vain and cheap,
And union before God the only care.

Creeds pass, rites change, no altar standeth whole !
Yet we her memory, as she prayed, will keep,
Keep by this : *Life in God, and union there !*

HUMAN LIFE

What mortal, when he saw,
Life's voyage done, his heavenly Friend,
Could ever yet dare tell him fearlessly :
" I have kept uninfringed my nature's law ;
The inly-written chart thou gavest me
To guide me, I have steered by to the end ? "

Ah ! let us make no claim
On life's incognizable sea

To too exact a steering of our way!
Let us not fret and fear to miss our aim,
If some fair coast has lured us to make stay,
Or some friend hailed us to keep company!—

Ay, we would each fain drive
At random, and n[illegible] by rule!
Weakness! and w[illegible]!
Winds from our s[illegible]
We rush by coast[illegible]
Man cannot, though[illegible]

No! as the foaming swath
Of torn-up water, on the main,
Falls [illegible] with long-drawn roar
On e[illegible]
Cut by an[illegible]
And never touches the ship-side again;

Even so we leave behind—
As, chartered by some unknown Powers,
We stem across the sea by night—
The joys which were not for our use designed,
The friends to whom we had no natural right,
The homes that were not destined to be ours.

RESIGNATION

TO FAUSTA

To die be given us, or attain!
Fierce work it were, to do again.
So pilgrims, bound for Mecca, prayed
At burning noon; so warriors said,
Scarfed with the cross, who watched the mil
Of dust that wreathed their struggling files

Down Lydian mountains ; so, when snows
Round Alpine summits eddying rose,
The Goth, bound Rome-wards ; so the Hun,
Crouched on his saddle, when the sun
Went lurid down o'er flooded plains
Through which the groaning Danube strains
To the drear Euxine ;—so pray all,
Whom labours, self-ordained, enthrall ;
Because they to themselves propose
On this side the all-common close
A goal which, gained, may give repose.
So pray they ; and to stand again
Where they stood once, to them were pain ;
Pain to thread back and to renew
Past straits, and currents long steered through.

But milder natures, and more free ;
Whom an unblamed serenity
Hath freed from passions, and the state
Of struggle these necessitate ;
Whom schooling of the stubborn mind
Hath made, or birth hath found, resigned—
These mourn not, that their goings pay
Obedience to the passing day.
These claim not every laughing Hour
For handmaid to their striding power ;
Each in her turn, with torch upreared,
To await their march ; and when appeared,
Through the cold gloom, with measured race,
To usher for a destined space,
(Her own sweet errands all forgone)
The too imperious traveller on !
These, Fausta, ask not this ; nor thou,
Time's chafing prisoner, ask it now !

We left, just ten years since, you say,
That wayside inn we left to-day.[20]

Resignation

Our jovial host, as forth we fare,
Shouts greeting from his easy chair;
High on a bank our leader stands,
Reviews and ranks his motley bands,
Makes clear our goal to every eye—
The valley's western boundary.
A gate swings to! our tide hath flowed
Already from the silent road!
The valley-pastures, one by one,
Are threaded, quiet in the sun;
And now beyond the rude stone bridge
Slopes gracious up the western ridge.
Its woody border, and the last
Of its dark upland farms is past;
Cool farms, with open-lying stores,
Under their burnished sycamores—
All past! and through the trees we glide
Emerging on the green hill-side.
There climbing hangs, a far-seen sign,
Our wavering, many-coloured line,
There winds, upstreaming slowly still
[illegible] hill
[illegible]
Mild hollows and clear [illegible] s,
The cheer [illegible]
Some two [illegible]
Through [illegible]
The red-grouse, springing at our [illegible]
Skims, now and then, the shining ground;
No life, save his and ours, intrudes
Upon these breathless solitudes.
O joy! again the farms appear!
Cool shade is there, and rustic cheer;
There springs the brook will guide us down,
Bright comrade, to the noisy town
Lingering, we follow down! we gain
The town, the highway, and the plain.

And many a mile of dusty way,
Parched and road-worn, we made that day;
But, Fausta! I remember well
That as the balmy darkness fell
We bathed our hands with speechless glee,
That night, in the wide-glimmering sea.

Once more we tread this self-same road,
Fausta! which ten years since we trod;
Alone we tread it, you and I,
Ghosts of that boisterous company.
Here, where the brook shines, near its head,
In its clear, shallow, turf-fringed bed;
Here, whence the eye first sees, far down,
Capped with faint smoke, the noisy town;
Here sit we, and again unroll,
Though slowly, the familiar whole!
The solemn wastes of heathy hill
Sleep in the July sunshine still;
The self-same shadows now, as then,
Play through this grassy upland glen;
The loose dark stones on the green way
Lie strewn, it seems, where then they lay;
On this mild bank above the stream,
(You crush them) the blue gentians gleam!
Still this wild brook, the rushes cool,
The sailing foam, the shining pool—
These are not changed; and we, you say,
Are scarce more changed, in truth, than they.

The gipsies, whom we met below,
They, too, have long roamed to and fro;
They ramble, leaving, where they pass,
Their fragments on the cumbered grass.
And often to some kindly place
Chance guides the migratory race,
Where, though long wanderings intervene,
They recognize a former scene.

The dingy tents are pitched; the fires
Give to the wind their wavering spires;
In dark knots crouch round the wild flame
Their children, as when first they came;

For them, for all, time's busy touch,
While it mends little, troubles much;
Their joints grow stiffer—but the year
Runs his old round of dubious cheer;
Chilly they grow—yet winds in March,
Still, sharp as ever, freeze and parch;
They must live still—and yet, God knows,
Crowded and keen the country grows!

Fausta! times past with times that are.
But no!—they rubbed through yesterday
In their hereditary way;
And they will rub through, if they can,
To-morrow on the self-same plan;
Till death arrives to supersede,
For them, vicissitude and need.

The poet, to whose mighty heart
Heaven doth a quicker pulse impart,

his day

He hath not lived, if he lives so.
He sees, in some great-historied land,
A ruler of the people stand,
Sees his strong thought in fiery flood
Roll through the heaving multitude;
Exults—yet for no moment's space
Envies the all-regarded place.
Beautiful eyes meet his—and he
Bears to admire uncravingly;
They pass—he, mingled with the crowd,
Is in their far-off triumphs proud.
From some high station he looks down,
At sunset, on a populous town;
Surveys each happy group which fleets,
Toil ended, through the shining streets,
Each with some errand of its own—
And does not say, *I am alone!*
He sees the gentle stir of birth
When morning purifies the earth;
He leans upon a gate, and sees
The pastures, and the quiet trees.
Low woody hill, with gracious bound,
Folds the still valley almost round;
The cuckoo, loud on some high lawn,
Is answered from the depth of dawn;
In the hedge straggling to the stream,
Pale, dew-drenched, half-shut roses gleam;
But where the further side slopes down
He sees the drowsy new-waked clown
In his white quaint-embroidered frock
Make, whistling, toward his mist-wreathed flock—
Slowly, behind his heavy tread,
The wet flowered grass heaves up its head.
Leaned on his gate, he gazes! tears
Are in his eyes, and in his ears
The murmur of a thousand years.
Before him he sees life unroll,
A placid and continuous whole;

Resignation

That general life, which does not cease
Whose secret is not joy, but peace;
That life, whose dumb wish is not missed
If birth proceeds, if things subsist;
The life of plants, and stones, and rain—
The life he craves! if not in vain
Fate gave, what chance shall not control.
His sad lucidity of soul.

You listen!—but that wandering smile,
Fausta, betrays you cold the while!
Your eyes pursue the bells of foam
Washed, eddying, from this bank, their home.
Those gipsies, so your thoughts I scan,
Are less, the poet more, than man;
They feel not, though they move and see!
Deeply the poet feels! but he
Breathes, when he will, immortal air,
Where Orpheus and where Homer are.
In the day's life, whose iron round
Hems us all in, he is not bound;
He escapes thence, but we abide.
Not deep the poet sees, but wide!

The world in which we live and move
Outlasts aversion, outlasts love,
Outlasts each effort, interest, hope,
Remorse, grief, joy;—and were the scope
Of these affections wider made,
Man still would see, and see dismayed,
Beyond his passion's widest range
Far regions of eternal change.
Nay, and since death, which wipes out man,
Finds him with many an unsolved plan,
With much unknown, and much untried,
Wonder not dead, and thirst not dried.
Still gazing on the ever full
Eternal mundane spectacle;

This world in which we draw our breath,
In some sense, Fausta! outlasts death.
  Blame thou not therefore him, who dares
Judge vain beforehand human cares;
Whose natural insight can discern
What through experience others learn;
Who needs not love and power, to know
Love transient, power an unreal show;
Who treads at ease life's uncheered ways—
Him blame not, Fausta, rather praise!
Rather thyself for some aim pray
Nobler than this, to fill the day!
Rather, that heart, which burns in thee,
Ask, not to amuse, but to set free!
Be passionate hopes not ill resigned
For quiet, and a fearless mind!
And though fate grudge to thee and me
The poet's rapt security,
Yet they, believe me, who await
No gifts from chance, have conquered fate.
They, winning room to see and hear,
And to men's business not too near,
Through clouds of individual strife
Draw homeward to the general life.
Like leaves by suns not yet uncurled—
To the wise, foolish; to the world,
Weak;—yet not weak, I might reply,
Not foolish, Fausta! in His eye,
To whom each moment in its race,
Crowd as we will its neutral space,
Is but a quiet watershed
Whence, equally, the seas of life and death are fed.

Enough, we live!—and if a life,
With large results so little rife,
Though bearable, seem hardly worth
This pomp of worlds, this pain of birth;
Yet, Fausta! the mute turf we tread,

The solemn hills around us spread,
This stream which falls incessantly,
The strange-scrawled rocks, the lonely sky,
If I might lend their life a voice,
Seem to bear rather than rejoice.
And even could the intemperate prayer
Man iterates, while these forbear,
For movement, for an ampler sphere,
Pierce Fate's impenetrable ear;
Not milder is the general lot
Because our spirits have forgot,
In action's dizzying eddy whirled,
The something that infects the world.

EPILOGUE TO LESSING'S LAOCOÖN

ONE morn as through Hyde Park we walked,
My friend and I, by chance we talked
Of Lessing's famed Laocoön;
And after we awhile had gone
In Lessing's track, and tried to see
What painting is, what poetry—
Diverging to another thought,
"Ah," cries my friend, "but who hath taught
Why music and the other arts
Oftener perform aright their parts
Than poetry? why she, than they,
Fewer fine successes can display?

"For 'tis so, surely! Even in Greece,
Where best the poet framed his piece,
Even in that Phœbus-guarded ground
Pausanias on his travels found
Good poems, if he looked, more rare
(Though many) than good statues were—
For these, in truth, were everywhere!

Of bards full many a stroke divine
In Dante's, Petrarch's, Tasso's line,
The land of Ariosto showed;
And yet, e'en there, the canvas glowed
With triumphs, a yet ampler brood,
Of Raphael and his brotherhood.
And nobly perfect, in our day
Of haste, half-work, and disarray,
Profound yet touching, sweet yet strong,
Hath risen Goethe's, Wordsworth's song;
Yet even I (and none will bow
Deeper to these!) must needs allow,
They yield us not, to soothe our pains,
Such multitude of heavenly strains
As from the kings of sound are blown,
Mozart, Beethoven, Mendelssohn."

While thus my friend discoursed, we pass
Out of the path, and take the grass.
The grass had still the green of May,
And still the unblackened elms were gay;
The kine were resting in the shade,
The flies a summer murmur made.
Bright was the morn and south the air
The soft-couched cattle were as fair
As those which pastured by the sea,
That old-world morn, in Sicily,
When on the beach the Cyclops lay,
And Galatea from the bay
Mocked her poor lovelorn giant's lay.
"Behold," I said, "the painter's sphere!
The limits of his art appear!
The passing group, the summer morn,
The grass, the elms, that blossomed thorn;
Those cattle couched, or, as they rise,
Their shining flanks, their liquid eyes;
These, or much greater things, but caught
Like these, and in one aspect brought.

In outward semblance he must give
A moment's life of things that live;
Then let him choose his moment well,
With power divine its story tell!"

Still we walked on, in thoughtful mood,
And now upon the bridge we stood.
Full of sweet breathings was the air,
Of sudden stirs and pauses fair.
Down o'er the stately bridge the breeze
Came rustling from the garden-trees,
And on the sparkling waters played;
Light-plashing waves an answer made,
And mimic boats their haven neared
Beyond, the Abbey-towers appeared,
By mist and chimneys unconfined,
Free to the sweep of light and wind;
While, through their earth-moored nave below,
Another breath of wind doth blow,
Sound as of wandering breeze—but sound
In laws by human artists bound
"The world of music!" I exclaimed,
"This breeze that rustles by, that famed
Abbey recall it! what a sphere,
Large and profound, hath genius here!
The inspired musician what a range,
What power of passion, wealth of change!
Some source of feeling he must choose
And its locked fount of beauty use,
And through the stream of music tell
Its else unutterable spell,
To choose it rightly is his part,
And press into its inmost heart

"*Miserere, Domine!*
The words are uttered, and they flee
Deep is their penitential moan,
Mighty their pathos, but 'tis gone!

They have declared the spirit's sore
Sore load, and words can do no more.
Beethoven takes them then—those two
Poor, bounded words!—and makes them new;
Infinite makes them, makes them young,
Transplants them to another tongue
Where they can now, without constraint,
Pour all the soul of their complaint,
And roll adown a channel large
The wealth divine they have in charge.
Page after page of music turn,
And still they live and still they burn,
Perennial, passion-fraught, and free—
Miserere, Domine!"

Onward we moved, and reached the ride
Where gaily flows the human tide.
Afar, in rest the cattle lay;
We heard, afar, faint music play;
But agitated, brisk, and near,
Men, with their stream of life, were here.
Some hang upon the rails, and some,
On foot, behind them, go and come.
This through the ride upon his steed
Goes slowly by, and this at speed;
The young, the happy, and the fair,
The old, the sad, the worn were there;
Some vacant, and some musing went,
And some in talk and merriment.
Nods, smiles, and greetings, and farewells!
And now and then, perhaps, there swells
A sigh, a tear—but in the throng
All changes fast, and hies along;
Hies, ah, from whence, what native ground?
And to what goal, what ending, bound?
"Behold at last the poet's sphere!
But who," I said, "suffices here?

For, ah! so much he has to do!
d musician too!

The aspect not, I g
Clear as the painter's art can dress;
The feeling not, I grant, explore
So deep as the musician's lore—
But clear as words can make revealing,
And deep as words can follow feeling.
But, ah, then comes his sorest spell
Of toil! he must life's *movement* tell!
The thread which binds it all in one,
And not its separate parts alone!
The *movement* he must tell of life,
Its pain and pleasure, rest and strife;
His eye must travel down, at full,
The long, unpausing spectacle,
With faithful unrelaxing force
Attend it from its primal source,
From change to change and year to year
Attend it of its mid career,
Attend it to the last repose
And solemn silence of its close.

"The cattle rising from the grass
His thought must follow where they pass;
The penitent with anguish bowed
His thought must follow through the crowd.
Yes, all this eddying, motley throng
That sparkles in the sun along,
Girl, statesman, merchant, soldier bold,
Master and servant, young and old,
Grave, gay, child, parent, husband, wife,
He follows home, and lives their life!

"And many, many are the souls
Life's movement fascinates, controls;

It draws them on, they cannot save
Their feet from its alluring wave;
They cannot leave it, they must go
With its unconquerable flow.
But, ah, how few of all that try
This mighty march, do aught but die!
For ill endowed for such a way,
Ill stored in strength, in wits, are they!
They faint, they stagger to and fro,
And wandering from the stream they go;
In pain, in terror, in distress,
They see, all round, a wilderness.
Sometimes a momentary gleam
They catch of the mysterious stream;
Sometimes, a second's space, their ear
The murmur of its waves doth hear;
That transient glimpse in song they say,
But not as painter can portray!
That transient sound in song they tell,
But not, as the musician, well!
And when at last their snatches cease,
And they are silent and at peace,
The stream of life's majestic whole
Hath ne'er been mirrored on their soul.

"Only a few the life-stream's shore
With safe unwandering feet explore;
Untired its movement bright attend,
Follow its windings to the end.
Then from its brimming waves their eye
Drinks up delighted ecstasy,
And its deep-toned, melodious voice,
For ever makes their ear rejoice.
They speak! the happiness divine
They feel, runs o'er in every line;
Its spell is round them like a shower;
It gives them pathos, gives them power
No painter yet hath such a way,

Nor no musician made, as they;
And gathered on immortal knolls
Such lovely flowers for cheering souls.
Beethoven, Raphael, cannot reach
The charm which Homer, Shakspeare, teach.
To these, to these, their thankful race
Gives, then, the first, the fairest place!
And brightest is their glory's sheen,
For greatest has their labour been."

THE YOUTH OF NATURE

RAISED are the dripping oars!
Silent the boat! the lake,
Lovely and soft as a dream,
Swims in the sheen of the moon.
The mountains stand at its head
Clear in the pure June night,
But the valleys are flooded with haze
Rydal and Fairfield are there!
In the shadow Wordsworth lies dead.
So it is, so it will be for aye!
Nature is fresh as of old,
Is lovely; a mortal is dead.

The spots which recall him survive,
For he lent a new life to these hills.
The Pillar still broods o'er the fields
Which border Ennerdale Lake,
[illegible] the sea.

Twinkles [illegible] solemn and gray
But ruined and solemn and gray
The sheepfold of Michael survives,
And far to the south, the heath
Still blows in the Quantock coombs,

By the favourite waters of Ruth.
These survive ! yet *not* without pain,
Pain and dejection to-night,
Can I feel that their poet is gone.

He grew old in an age he condemned.
He looked on the rushing decay
Of the times which had sheltered his youth :
Felt the dissolving throes
Of a social order he loved ;
Outlived his brethren, his peers ;
And, like the Theban seer,
Died in his enemies' day.

Cold bubbled the spring of Tilphusa,
Copais lay bright in the moon,
Helicon glassed in the lake
Its firs, and afar, rose the peaks
Of Parnassus, snowily clear ;
Thebes was behind him in flames,
And the clang of arms in his ear,
When his awe-struck captors led
The Theban seer to the spring.
Tiresias drank and died.
Nor did reviving Thebes
See such a prophet again.

Well may we mourn, when the head
Of a sacred poet lies low
In an age which can rear them no more !
The complaining millions of men
Darken in labour and pain ;
But he was a priest to us all
Of the wonder and bloom of the world,
Which we saw with his eyes, and were glad.
He is dead, and the fruit-bearing day
Of his race is past on the earth ;
And darkness returns to our eyes.

For oh! is it you, is it you,
Moonlight, and shadow, and lake,
And mountains, that fill us with joy,
Or the poet who sings you so well?
Is it you, O beauty, O grace,
O charm, O romance, that we feel,
Or the voice which reveals what you are?
Are ye, like daylight and sun,
Shared and rejoiced in by all?
Or are ye immersed in the mass
Of matter, and hard to extract,
Or sunk at the core of the world
Too deep for the most to discern?
Like stars in the deep of the sky,
Which arise on the glass of the sage,
But are lost when their watcher is gone.

"They are here"—I heard, as men heard
In Mysian Ida the voice
Of the Mighty Mother, or Crete,
The murmur of Nature reply:—
"Loveliness, magic, and grace,
They are here! they are set in the world!
They abide! and the finest of souls
Has not been thrilled by them all,
Nor the dullest been dead to them quite.
The poet who sings them may die,
But they are immortal, and live,
For they are the life of the world!
Will ye not learn it, and know,
When ye mourn that a poet is dead,
That the singer was less than his themes,
Life, and emotion, and I?

"More than the singer are these!
Weak is the tremor of pain
That thrills in his mournfullest chord

To that which once ran through his soul.
Cold the elation of joy
In his gladdest, airiest song,
To that which of old in his youth
Filled him and made him divine.
Hardly his voice at its best
Gives us a sense of the awe,
The vastness, the grandeur, the gloom
Of the unlit gulph of himself.

"Ye know not yourselves! and your bar
The clearest, the best, who have read
Most in themselves, have beheld
Less than they left unrevealed.
Ye express not yourselves!—can ye mak
With marble, with colour, with word,
What charmed you in others re-live?
Can thy pencil, O artist! restore
The figure, the bloom of thy love,
As she was in her morning of spring?
Canst thou paint the ineffable smile
Of her eyes as they rested on thine?
Can the image of life have the glow,
The motion of life itself?

"Yourselves and your fellows ye know
The mateless, the one, will ye know?
Will ye scan me, and read me, and tell
Of the thoughts that ferment in my br
My longing, my sadness, my joy?
Will ye claim for your great ones the g
To have rendered the gleam of my ski
To have echoed the moan of my seas,
Uttered the voice of my hills?
When your great ones depart, will ye
All things have suffered a loss!
Nature is hid in their grave!

Race after race, man after man,
Have thought that my secret was theirs,
Have dreamed that I lived but for them,
That they were my glory and joy.—
They are dust, they are changed, they are g
I remain!"

THE YOUTH OF MAN

We, O Nature, depart;
Thou survivest us! this,
This, I know, is the law.
Yes, but more than this,
Thou who seest us die
Seest us change while we live;
Seest our dreams, one by one,
Seest our errors depart;
Watchest us, Nature, throughout,
Mild and inscrutably calm!

Well for us that we change!
Well for us that the power
Which in our morning prime
Saw mistakes of our youth,
Sweet, and forgiving, and good,
Sees the contrition of age!

Behold, O Nature, this pair!
See them to-night where they stand,
Not with the halo of youth
Crowning their brows with its light,
Not with the sunshine of hope,
Not with the rapture of spring,
Which they had of old, when they stooc
Years ago at my side
In this self-same garden, and said:

"We are young, and the world is ours,
For man is the king of the world!
Fools that these mystics are
Who prate of Nature! but she
Hath neither beauty, nor warmth,
Nor life, nor emotion, nor power.
But man has a thousand gifts,
And the generous dreamer invests
The senseless world with them all.
Nature is nothing! her charm
Lives in our eyes which can paint,
Lives in our hearts which can feel!"

Thou, O Nature, wast mute,
Mute as of old! days flew,
Days and years; and Time
With the ceaseless stroke of his wings
Brushed off the bloom from their soul.
Clouded and dim grew their eye,
Languid their heart—for youth
Quickened its pulses no more.
Slowly within the walls
Of an ever-narrowing world
They drooped, they grew blind, they grew old.
Thee and their youth in thee,
Nature, they saw no more!

Murmur of living!
Stir of existence!
Soul of the world!
Make, oh make yourselves felt
To the dying spirit of youth!
Come, like the breath of the spring
Leave not a human soul
To grow old in darkness and pain!
Only the living can feel you,
But leave us not while we live!

Here they stand to-night—
Here, where this grey balustrade
Crowns the still valley; behind
Is the castled house with its woods
Which sheltered their childhood, the sun
On its ivied windows! a scent
From the grey-walled gardens, a breath
Of the fragrant stock and the pink,
Perfumes the evening air.
Their children play on the lawns.
They stand and listen; they hear
The children's shouts, and, at times,
Faintly, the bark of a dog
From a distant farm in the hills;—
Nothing besides! in front
The wide, wide valley outspreads
To the dim horizon, reposed
In the twilight, and bathed in dew,
Corn-field and hamlet and copse
Darkening fast! but a light,
Far off, a glory of day,
Still plays on the city-spires;
And there in the dusk by the walls,
With the grey mist marking its course
Through the silent flowery land,
On, to the plains, to the sea,
Floats the imperial stream.

Well I know what they feel!
They gaze, and the evening wind
Plays on their faces! they gaze;
Airs from the Eden of youth
Awake and stir in their soul!
The past returns; they feel
What they are, alas, what they were!
They, not Nature, are changed!
Well I know what they feel

Hush! for tears
Begin to steal to their eyes;
Hush! for fruit
Grows from such sorrow as theirs.

And they remember,
With piercing, untold anguish,
The proud boasting of their youth;
And they feel how Nature was fair;
And the mists of delusion,
And the scales of habit,
Fall away from their eyes;
And they see, for a moment,
Stretching out, like the desert
In its weary, unprofitable length,
Their faded, ignoble lives.

While the locks are yet brown on thy head,
While the soul still looks through thine eyes,
While the heart still pours
The mantling blood to thy cheek,
Sink, O youth, in thy soul!
Yearn to the greatness of Nature!
Rally the good in the depths of thyself!

YOUTH AND CALM

'Tis death! and peace, indeed, is here,
And ease from shame, and rest from fear.
There's nothing can dismarble now
The smoothness of that limpid brow.
But is a calm like this, in truth,
The crowning end of life and youth,
And when this boon rewards the dead,
Are all debts paid, has all been said?
And is the heart of youth so light,

THE WORLD'S TRIUMPHS

So far as I conceive the world's rebuke
To him addressed who would recast her new,
Not from herself her fame of strength she took,
But from their weakness, who would work her rue.

"Behold," she cries, "so many rages lulled,
So many fiery spirits quite cooled down!
Look how so many valours, long undulled,
After short commerce with me, fear my frown!

"Thou too, when thou against my crimes wouldst cry,
Let thy foreboded homage check thy tongue!"—
The world speaks well; yet might her foe reply:
"Are wills so weak?—then let not mine wait long!

"Hast thou so rare a poison?—let me be
Keener to slay thee, lest thou poison me!"

GROWING OLD

What is it to grow old?
Is it to lose the glory of the form,
The lustre of the eye?
Is it for beauty to forgo her wreath?—
Yes, but not this alone!

Is it to feel our strength—
Not our bloom only, but our strength—decay?
Is it to feel each limb
Grow stiffer, every function less exact,
Each nerve more weakly strung?

Thoughts light, like gleams, my spirit's sky,
But they will not remain;
They light me once, they hurry by,
And never come again.

SELF-DECEPTION

SAY, what blinds us, that we claim the glory
Of possessing powers not our share?—
Since man woke on earth, he knows his story,
But, before we woke on earth, we were.

Long, long since, undowered yet, our spirit
Roamed, ere birth, the treasuries of God;
Saw the gifts, the powers it might inherit,
Asked an outfit for its earthly road.

Then, as now, this tremulous, eager being
Strained, and longed, and grasped each gift it saw;
Then, as now, a power beyond our seeing
Staved us back, and gave our choice the law.

Ah, whose hand that day through Heaven guided
Man's new spirit, since it was not we?
Ah, who swayed our choice, and who decided
What our gifts, and what our wants should be?

For, alas, he left us each retaining
Shreds of gifts which he refused in full!
Still these waste us with their hopeless straining;
Still the attempt to use them proves them null.

And on earth we wander, groping, reeling;
Powers stir in us, stir and disappear.
Ah, and he, who placed our master-feeling,
Failed to place that master-feeling clear!

We but dream we have our wished-for powers,
Ends we seek we never shall attain!
Ah! *some* power exists there, which is ours?
Some end is there, we indeed may gain?

THE PROGRESS OF POESY

A Variation

Youth rambles on life's arid mount,
And strikes the rock, and finds the vein,
And brings the water from the fount,
The fount which shall not flow again.

The man mature with labour chops
For the bright stream a channel grand,
And sees not that the sacred drops
Ran off and vanished out of hand.

And then the old man totters nigh,
And feebly rakes among the stones.
The mount is mute, the channel dry!
And down he lays his weary bones.

THE LAST WORD

Creep into thy narrow bed,
Creep, and let no more be said
Vain thy onset! all stands fast!
Thou thyself must break at last.

Let the long contention cease!
Geese are swans, and swans are geese.
Let them have it how they will!
Thou art tired; best be still.

They out-talked thee, hissed thee, tore thee?
Better men fared thus before thee!
Fired their ringing shot and passed,
Hotly charged—and broke at last.

Charge once more, then, and be dumb!
Let the victors, when they come,
When the forts of folly fall,
Find thy body by the wall!

A NAMELESS EPITAPH

Ask not my name, O friend!
That Being only, which hath known each man
From the beginning, can
Remember each unto the end.

THE SECOND BEST

Moderate tasks and moderate leisure,
Quiet living, strict-kept measure
Both in suffering and in pleasure—
  'Tis for this thy nature yearns.

But so many books thou readest,
But so many schemes thou breedest,
But so many wishes feedest,
  That thy poor head almost turns.

And (the world's so madly jangled,
Human things so fast entangled)
Nature's wish must now be strangled
  For that best which she discerns.

Pis-aller

So it *must* be! yet, while leading
A strained life, while overfeeding,
Like the rest, his wit with reading,
No small profit that man earns,

Who through all he meets can steer him,
Can reject what cannot clear him,
Cling to what can truly cheer him!
Who each day more surely learns

That an impulse, from the distance
Of his deepest, best existence,
To the words, "Hope, Light, Persistence,"
Strongly sets and truly burns!

PIS-ALLER

"MAN is blind because of sin;
Revelation makes him sure
Without that, who looks within,
Looks in vain, for all's obscure"

Nay, look closer into man!
Tell me, can you find indeed
Nothing sure, no moral plan
Clear prescribed, without your creed?

"No, I nothing can perceive!
Without that, all's dark for men.
That, or nothing, I believe."—
For God's sake, believe it then!

IN UTRUMQUE PARATUS

If, in the silent mind of One all-pure
 At first imagined lay
The sacred world, and by procession sure
From those still deeps, in form and colour drest,
Seasons alternating and night and day,
The long-mused thought to north, south, east, and west
 Took then its all-seen way;

O waking on a world which thus-wise springs!
 Whether it needs thee count
Betwixt thy waking and the birth of things
Ages or hours—O waking on life's stream!
By lonely pureness to the all-pure fount
(Only by this thou canst) the coloured dream
 Of life remount!

Thin, thin the pleasant human noises grow,
 And faint the city gleams,
Rare the lone pastoral huts;—marvel not thou!
The solemn peaks but to the stars are known,
But to the stars, and the cold lunar beams;
Alone the sun arises, and alone
 Spring the great streams.

But if the wild unfathered mass no birth
 In divine seats hath known;
In the blank, echoing solitude if Earth,
Rocking her obscure body to and fro,
Ceases not from all time to heave and groan,
Unfruitful oft, and, at her happiest throe,
 Forms, what she forms, alone;

O seeming sole to awake, thy sun-bathed head
 Piercing the solemn cloud
Round thy still dreaming brother-world outspread!

... pare

Thy native world stirs at thy feet unknown,
Yet there thy secret lies!
Out of this stuff, these forces, thou art grown,
And proud self-severance from them were disease.
O scan thy native world with pious eyes!
High as thy life be risen, 'tis from these;
And these, too, rise.

LINES WRITTEN IN KENSINGTON GARDENS

Those black-crowned, red-boled pine-trees stand!

Sometimes a child will cross the glade
To take his nurse his broken toy;
Sometimes a thrush flit overhead
Deep in her unknown day's employ.

Here at my feet what wonders pass,
What endless, active life is here!
What blowing daisies, fragrant grass!
An air-stirred forest, fresh and clear

Scarce fresher is the mountain-sod
Where the tired angler lies, stretched out,
And, eased of basket and of rod,
Counts his day's spoil, the spotted trout.

In the huge world, which roars hard by,
Be others happy if they can!
But in my helpless cradle I
Was breathed on by the rural Pan.

I, on men's impious uproar hurled,
Think often, as I hear them rave,
That peace has left the upper world,
And now keeps only in the grave.

Yet here is peace for ever new!
When I who watch them am away,
Still all things in this glade go through
The changes of their quiet day.

Then to their happy rest they pass;
The flowers upclose, the birds are fed,
The night comes down upon the grass,
The child sleeps warmly in his bed.

Calm soul of all things! make it mine
To feel, amid the city's jar,
That there abides a peace of thine,
Man did not make, and cannot mar!

The will to neither strive nor cry,
The power to feel with others give!
Calm, calm me more! nor let me die
Before I have begun to live.

PALLADIUM

Set where the upper streams of Simois flow
Was the Palladium, high 'mid rock and wood;
And Hector was in Ilium, far below,
And fought, and saw it not—but there it stood.

It stood, and sun and moonshine rained their ligh

Round Troy; but while this stood, Troy could no

Men will renew the battle in the plain
To-morrow; red with blood will Xanthus be,
Hector and Ajax will be there again,
Helen will come upon the wall to see.

Then we shall rust in shade, or shine in strife,
And fluctuate 'twixt blind hopes and blind despair
And fancy that we put forth all our life,
And never know how with the soul it fares.

Still doth the soul, from its lone fastness high,

A WISH

I ASK not that my bed of death
From bands of greedy heirs be free;
For these besiege the latest breath
Of fortune's favoured sons, not me.

I ask not each kind soul to keep
Tearless, when of my death he hears;
Let those who will, if any, weep!
There are worse plagues on earth than t

I ask but that my death may find
The freedom to my life denied!
Ask but the folly of mankind,
Then, then at last, to quit my side!

Spare me the whispering, crowded roon
The friends who come, and gape, and g
The ceremonious air of gloom—
All, that makes death a hideous show!

Nor bring, to see me cease to live,
Some doctor full of phrase and fame,
To shake his sapient head, and give
The ill he cannot cure a name!

Nor fetch, to take the accustomed toll
Of the poor sinner bound for death,
His brother doctor of the soul,
To canvass with official breath

The future and its viewless things—
That undiscovered mystery
Which one who feels death's winnow
Must needs read clearer, sure, than h

Consolation

Bring none of these! but let me be,
While all around in silence lies,
Moved to the window near, and see
Once more, before my dying eyes,

Bathed in the sacred dews of morn
The wide aërial landscape spread—
The world which was ere I was born,
The world which lasts when I am dead!

Which never was the friend of *one*,
Nor promised love it could not give;
But lit for all its generous sun,
And lived itself, and made us live.

There let me gaze, till I become
In soul with what I gaze on wed!
To feel the universe my home;
To have before my mind—instead

Of a sick room, a mortal strife,
A turmoil for a little breath—
The pure eternal course of life,
Not human combatings with death.

Thus feeling, gazing, let me grow
Composed, refreshed, ennobled, clear;
Then willing let my spirit go
To work or wait elsewhere or here!

CONSOLATION

Mist clogs the sunshine,
Smoky dwarf houses
Hem me round everywhere
A vague dejection
Weighs down my soul.

Yet, while I languish,
Everywhere countless
Prospects unroll themselves,
And countless beings
Pass countless moods.

Far hence, in Asia,
On the smooth convent-roofs
On the gold terraces
Of holy Lassa,
Bright shines the sun.

Grey time-worn marbles
Hold the pure Muses;
In their cool gallery,
By yellow Tiber,
They still look fair.

Strange unloved uproar *
Shrills round their portal;
Yet not on Helicon
Kept they more cloudless
Their noble calm.

Through sun-proof alleys
In a lone, sand-hemmed
City of Africa,
A blind, led beggar,
Age-bowed, asks alms.

No bolder robber
Erst abode ambushed
Deep in the sandy waste;
No clearer eyesight
Spied prey afar.

* Written during the siege of Rome by the Frencl

Consum...
Saharan sand-winds
Seared his keen eyeballs ;
Spent is the spoil he won !
For him the present
Holds only pain.

Two young, fair lovers,
Where the warm June-wind,
Fresh from the summer fields
Plays fondly round them,
Stand, tranced in joy.

With sweet, joined voices,
And with eyes brimming :
" Ah," they cry, " Destiny
Prolong the present ;
Time, stand still here ! "

The prompt stern Goddess
Shakes her head, frowning ;
Time gives his hour-glass
Its due reversal ;
Their hour is gone !

With weak indulgence
Did the just Goddess
Lengthen their happiness,
She lengthened also
Distress elsewhere

The hour, whose happy
Unalloyed moments
I would eternalize,
Ten thousand mourners
Well pleased see end.

The bleak stern hour,
Whose severe moments

I would annihilate,
Is passed by others
In warmth, light, joy.

Time, so complained of,
Who to no one man
Shows partiality,
Brings round to all men
Some undimmed hours.

SELF-DEPENDENCE

WEARY of myself, and sick of asking
What I am, and what I ought to be,
At the vessel's prow I stand, which bears me
Forwards, forwards, o'er the starlit sea.

And a look of passionate desire
O'er the sea and to the stars I send :
" Ye who from my childhood up have calmed me,
Calm me, ah, compose me to the end !

" Ah, once more," I cried, " ye stars, ye waters,
On my heart your mighty charm renew !
Still, still let me, as I gaze upon you,
Feel my soul becoming vast like you ! "

From the intense, clear, star-sown vault of heaven,
Over the lit sea's unquiet way,
In the rustling night-air came the answer :
" Wouldst thou *be* as these are ? *Live* as they !

" Unaffrighted by the silence round them,
Undistracted by the sights they see,
These demand not, that the things without them
Yield them love, amusement, sympathy.

"Bounded by themselves, and unregardful
In what state God's other works may be,
In their own tasks all their powers pouring,
These attain the mighty life you see."

*   *   *   *

MORALITY

Can be through hours of gloom fulfilled.

'one.

Thy struggling, tasked morality

Bitter spirits! ye claim
Heine?——Alas, he is yours!
Only a moment I longed
Here in the quiet to snatch
From such mates the outworn
Poet, and steep him in calm.
Only a moment! I knew
Whose he was who is here
Buried, I knew he was yours!
Ah, I knew that I saw
Here no sepulchre built
In the laurelled rock, o'er the blue
Naples bay, for a sweet
Tender Virgil! no tomb
On Ravenna sands, in the shade
Of Ravenna pines, for a high
Austere Dante! no grave
By the Avon side, in the bright
Stratford meadows, for thee,
Shakspeare! loveliest of souls,
Peerless in radiance, in joy!

What so harsh and malign,
Heine! distils from thy life,
Poisons the peace of thy grave?

I chide with thee not, that thy sharp
Upbraidings often assailed
England, my country; for we,
Troublous and sad, for her sons,
Long since, deep in our hearts,
Echo the blame of her foes.
We, too, sigh that she flags!
We, too, say that she now,
Scarce comprehending the voice
Of her greatest, golden-mouthed sons
Of a former age any more,
Stupidly travels her round

Of mechanic business, and lets
Slow die out of her life
Glory, and genius, and joy!

So thou arraign'st her, her foe.
So we arraign her, her sons.

Yes, we arraign her! but she,
The weary Titan! with deaf
Ears, and labour-dimmed eyes,
Regarding neither to right
Nor left, goes passively by,
Staggering on to her goal;
Bearing on shoulders immense,
Atlantēan, the load,
Wellnigh not to be borne,
Of the too vast orb of her fate.

But was it thou—I think
Surely it was—that bard
Unnamed, who, Goethe said,
Had every other gift, but wanted love
Love, without which the tongue
Even of angels sounds amiss?

Charm is the glory which makes
Song of the poet divine;
Love is the fountain of charm!
How without charm wilt thou draw,
Poet! the world to thy way?
Not by the lightnings of wit!
Not by the thunder of scorn!
These to the world, too, are given;
Wit it possesses, and scorn—
Charm is the poet's alone.
Hollow and dull are the great,
And artists envious, and the mob profane.
We know all this, we know!

Cam'st thou from heaven, O child
Of light! but this to declare?
Alas! to help us forget
Such barren knowledge awhile,
God gave the poet his song.

Therefore a secret unrest
Tortured thee, brilliant and bold!
Therefore triumph itself
Tasted amiss to thy soul!
Therefore, with blood of thy foes,
Trickled in silence thine own!
Therefore the victor's heart
Broke on the field of his fame!

Ah! as of old, from the pomp
Of Italian Milan, the fair
Flower of marble of white
Southern palaces—steps
Bordered by statues, and walks
Terraced, and orange-bowers
Heavy with fragrance—the blond
German Kaiser full oft
Longed himself back to the fields,
Rivers, and high-roofed towns
Of his native Germany; so,
So, how often! from hot
Paris drawing-rooms, and lamps
Blazing, and brilliant crowds,
Starred and jewelled, of men
Famous, of women the queens
Of dazzling converse, and fumes
Of praise—hot, heady fumes, to the poor brain
That mount, that madden!—how oft
Heine's spirit outworn
Longed itself out of the din
Back to the tranquil, the cool
Far German home of his youth!

.artz,

shade—

Up, by the
Moss-hung boulders and thin
Musical water half-hid—
Up, o'er the rock-strewn slope,
With the sinking sun, and the air
Chill, and the shadows now
Long on the grey hill-side—
To the stone-roofed hut at the top.

Or, yet later, in watch
On the roof of the Brocken-tower
Thou standest, gazing ! to see
The broad red sun, over field
d city and spire

In a bank of vapours——again
Standest ! at nightfall, alone

Or, next morning, with limbs
l heart

Ilse, the fairy transformed,
In a thousand water-breaks light
Pours her petulant youth—
Climbing the rock which juts
O'er the valley, the dizzily perched

Rock! to its iron cross
Once more thou cling'st; to the Cross
Clingest! with smiles, with a sigh.

Goethe, too, had been there.[21]
In the long-past winter he came
To the frozen Hartz, with his soul
Passionate, eager, his youth
All in ferment!—but he
Destined to work and to live
Left it, and thou, alas,
Only to laugh and to die!

But something prompts me: Not thus
Take leave of Heine, not thus
Speak the last word at his grave!
Not in pity, and not
With half censure—with awe
Hail, as it passes from earth
Scattering lightnings, that soul!

The spirit of the world
Beholding the absurdity of men,—
Their vaunts, their feats,—let a sardonic smile,
For one short moment, wander o'er his lips.
That smile was Heine! for its earthly hour
The strange guest sparkled; now 'tis passed away.

That was Heine! and we,
Myriads who live, who have lived,
What are we all, but a mood,
A single mood, of the life
Of the Being in whom we exist,
Who alone is all things in one.

Spirit, who fillest us all!
Spirit who utterest in each

New-coming son of mankind
Such of thy thoughts as thou wilt!
O thou, one of whose moods,
Bitter and strange, was the life
Of Heine—his strange, alas!
His bitter life—may a life
Other and milder be mine!
May'st thou a mood more serene,
Happier, have uttered in mine!
May'st thou the rapture of peace
Deep have embreathed at its core
Made it a ray of thy thought!
Made it a beat of thy joy!

REVOLUTIONS

could.

ade Greece,
essayed

s made.

And drooped, and slowly died upon their throne.

One day, thou say'st, there will at last appear
The word, the order, which God meant should be.
—Ah, we shall know *that* well when it comes near!
The band will quit man's heart; he will breathe free.

STANZAS FROM THE GRANDE CHARTREUSE

Through Alpine meadows soft suffused
With rain, where thick the crocus blows,
Past the dark forges long disused,
The mule-track from Saint Laurent goes.
The bridge is crossed, and slow we ride,
Through forest, up the mountain-side.

The autumnal evening darkens round,
The wind is up, and drives the rain;
While hark! far down, with strangled sound
Doth the Dead Guier's stream complain,
Where that wet smoke among the woods
Over his boiling cauldron broods.

Swift rush the spectral vapours white
Past limestone scars with ragged pines,
Showing—then blotting from our sight.
Halt! through the cloud-drift something shines!
High in the valley, wet and drear,
The huts of Courrerie appear.

Strike leftward! cries our guide; and higher
Mounts up the stony forest-way.
At last the encircling trees retire;
Look! through the showery twilight grey
What pointed roofs are these advance?—
A palace of the Kings of France?

Approach, for what we seek is here!
Alight, and sparely sup, and wait
For rest in this outbuilding near;
Then cross the sward and reach that gate;
Knock; pass the wicket! Thou art come
To the Carthusians' world-famed home.

The silent courts, where night and day
Into their stone-carved basins cold
The splashing icy fountains play;
The humid corridors behold,
Where ghostlike in the deepening night
Cowled forms brush by in gleaming white!

The chapel, where no organ's peal
Invests the stern and naked prayer!
With penitential cries they kneel
And wrestle; rising then, with bare
And white uplifted faces stand,
Passing the Host from hand to hand;

Each takes, and then his visage wan
Is buried in his cowl once more.
The cells—the suffering Son of Man
Upon the wall! the knee-worn floor!
And where they sleep, that wooden bed,
Which shall their coffin be, when dead!

The library, where tract and tome
Not to feed priestly pride are there,
To hymn the conquering march of Rome,
Nor yet to amuse, as worldings' are!
They paint of souls the inner strife,
Their drops of blood, their death in life.

The garden, overgrown—yet mild
Those fragrant herbs are flowering there!

Strong children of the Alpine wild
Whose culture is the brethren's care;
Of human tasks their only one,
And cheerful works beneath the sun.

Those halls too, destined to contain
Each its own pilgrim-host of old,
From England, Germany, or Spain—
All are before me! I behold
The House, the Brotherhood austere!—
And what am I, that I am here?

For rigorous teachers seized my youth,
And purged its faith, and trimmed its fire,
Showed me the high white star of Truth,
There bade me gaze, and there aspire.
Even now their whispers pierce the gloom
What dost thou in this living tomb?

Forgive me, masters of the mind!
At whose behest I long ago
So much unlearnt, so much resigned
I come not here to be your foe.
I seek these anchorites, not in ruth,
To curse and to deny your truth!

Not as their friend or child I speak!
But as, on some far northern strand,
Thinking of his own Gods, a Greek
In pity and mournful awe might stand
Before some fallen Runic stone—
For both were faiths, and both are gone!

Wandering between two worlds, one dead,
The other powerless to be born,
With nowhere yet to rest my head,
Like these, on earth I wait forlorn.

Their faith, my tears, the world deride;
I come to shed them at their side.

Oh, hide me in your gloom profound
Ye solemn seats of holy pain!
Take me, cowled forms, and fence me round,
Till I possess my soul again!
Till free my thoughts before me roll,
Not chafed by hourly false control.

For the world cries your faith is now
But a dead time's exploded dream;
My melancholy, sciolists say,
Is a passed mode, an outworn theme—
As if the world had ever had
A faith, or sciolists been sad!

Ah, if it *be* passed, take away,
At least, the restlessness—the pain!
ey

Ah, leave us not the fret alone!

But, if you cannot give us ease,
Last of the race of them who grieve
Here leave us to die out with these
Last of the people who believe!
Silent, while years engrave the brow;
Silent—the best are silent now.

Our fathers watered with their tears
This sea of time whereon we sail;
Their voices were in all men's ears
Who passed within their puissant hail.
Still the same ocean round us raves,
But we stand mute and watch the waves.

For what availed it, all the noise
And outcry of the former men?—
Say, have their sons obtained more joys?
Say, is life lighter now than then?
The sufferers died, they left their pain;
The pangs which tortured them remain!

What helps it now, that Byron bore,
With haughty scorn which mocked the smart,
Through Europe to the Ætolian shore
The pageant of his bleeding heart?
That thousands counted every groan,
And Europe made his woe her own?

What boots it, Shelley! that the breeze
Carried thy lovely wail away,
Musical through Italian trees
Which fringe thy soft blue Spezzian bay?
Inheritors of thy distress
Have restless hearts one throb the less?

Or are we easier, to have read,
O Obermann! the sad, stern page,
Which tells us how thou hidd'st thy head
From the fierce tempest of thine age
In the lone brakes of Fontainebleau,
Or chalets near the Alpine snow?

Ye slumber in your silent grave!
The world, which for an idle day

Grace to your mood of sadness gave,
Long since hath flung her weeds away.
The eternal trifler breaks your spell;
But we—we learnt your lore too well!

There yet, perhaps, may dawn an age,
More fortunate, alas! than we,
Which without hardness will be sage,
And gay without frivolity.
Sons of the world, oh, haste those years;
But, till they rise, allow our tears!

Allow them! We admire with awe

. . . .

Your pride of life, your tireless powers,
We mark them, but they are not ours.

We are like children reared in shade
Beneath some old-world abbey-wall,
Forgotten in a forest-glade,
And secret from the eyes of all.
Deep, deep the greenwood round them waves,
Their abbey, and its close of graves!

But where the road runs near the stream,
Oft through the trees they catch a glance
Of passing troops in the sun's beam—
Pennon, and plume, and flashing lance!
Forth to the world those soldiers fare,
To life, to cities, and to war.

. . . .

Gay dames are there in sylvan green,
Laughter and cries—those notes between!

The banners flashing through the trees
Make their blood dance and chain their eyes;
That bugle-music on the breeze
Arrests them with a charmed surprise.
Banner by turns and bugle woo:
Ye shy recluses, follow too!

O children, what do ye reply?—
"Action and pleasure, will ye roam
Through these secluded dells to cry
And call us? but too late ye come!
Too late for us your call ye blow,
Whose bent was taken long ago.

"Long since we pace this shadowed nave
We watch those yellow tapers shine,
Emblems of hope over the grave,
In the high altar's depth divine.
The organ carries to our ear
Its accents of another sphere.

"Fenced early in this cloistral round
Of reverie, of shade, of prayer,
How should we grow in other ground?
How should we flower in foreign air?—
Pass, banners, pass, and bugles, cease!
And leave our desert to its peace!"

PROGRESS

The Master stood upon the mount, and taught.
He saw a fire in his disciples' eyes;
"The old law," they said, "is wholly come to nought!
Behold the new world rise!"

" Was it," the Lord then said, " with scorn ye saw
The old law observed by Scribes and Pharisees ?
I say unto you, see *ye* keep that law
    More faithfully than these !

    Till all hath been fulfilled."

    To clear the new world's way ?

" Religious fervours ! ardour misapplied !
Hence, hence," they cry, " ye do but keep man blind
But keep him self-immersed, preoccupied,
    And lame the active mind."

Ah ! from the old world let some one answer give :
" Scorn ye this world, their tears, their inward cares ?
  I say unto you, see that *your* souls live
    A deeper life than theirs.

" Say ye : ' The spirit of man has found new roads,
And we must leave the old faiths, and walk therein ? '
Leave then the Cross as ye have left carved gods,
    But guard the fire within !

" Bright, else, and fast the stream of life may roll,
And no man may the other's hurt behold ;
Yet each will have one anguish !—his own soul
    Which perishes of cold."

Here let that voice make end ; then, let a strain
From a far lonelier distance, like the wind

Be heard, floating through heaven, and fill again
    These men's profoundest mind:

"Children of men! the unseen Power, whose eye
For ever doth accompany mankind,
Hath looked on no religion scornfully
    That men did ever find.

"Which has not taught weak wills how much they can?
Which has not fall'n on the dry heart like rain?
Which has not cried to sunk, self-weary man:
    Thou must be born again!

"Children of men! not that your age excel
In pride of life the ages of your sires,
But that you think clear, feel deep, bear fruit well,
    The Friend of man desires."

STANZAS IN MEMORY OF THE AUTHOR OF "OBERMANN"[22]

In front the awful Alpine track
Crawls up its rocky stair;
The autumn storm-winds drive the rack,
Close o'er it, in the air.

Behind are the abandoned baths[23]
Mute in their meadows lone;
The leaves are on the valley paths,
The mists are on the Rhone—

The white mists rolling like a sea!
I hear the torrents roar.
—Yes, Obermann, all speaks of thee;
I feel thee near once more!

I turn thy leaves! I feel their breath

Fly hence, poor wretch, whoe'er thou art,
Condemned to cast about,
All shipwreck in thy own weak heart,
For comfort from without!

A fever in these pages burns
Beneath the calm they feign;
A wounded human spirit turns,
Here, on its bed of pain.

Though here a mountain-murmur swells
Of many a dark-boughed pine,
Though, as you read, you hear the bells
Of the high-pasturing kine—

Yet, through the hum of torrent lone,
And brooding mountain-bee,
There sobs I know not what ground-tone
Of human agony!

Is it for this, because the sound
Is fraught too deep with pain,
That, Obermann! the world around
So little loves thy strain?

Some secrets may the poet tell,
For the world loves new ways;

To tell too deep ones is not well—
It knows not what he says.

Yet of the spirits who have reigned
In this our troubled day,
I know but two, who have attained,
Save thee, to see their way.

By England's lakes, in grey old age,
His quiet home one keeps; *
And one, the strong much-toiling sage,
In German Weimar sleeps.

But Wordsworth's eyes avert their ken
From half of human fate;
And Goethe's course few sons of men
May think to emulate.

For he pursued a lonely road,
His eyes on Nature's plan;
Neither made man too much a God
Nor God too much a man.

Strong was he, with a spirit free
From mists, and sane, and clear;
Clearer, how much! than ours—yet we
Have a worse course to steer.

For though his manhood bore the blast
Of a tremendous time,
Yet in a tranquil world was passed
His tenderer youthful prime.

But we, brought forth and reared in hours
Of change, alarm, surprise—
What shelter to grow ripe is ours?
What leisure to grow wise?

* Written in November 1849.

[illegible]

Like children bathing on the shore,
Buried a wave beneath,
The second wave succeeds, before
We have had time to breathe.

Too fast we live, too much are tried,
Too harassed, to attain
Wordsworth's sweet calm, or Goethe's wide
And luminous view to gain.

And then we turn, thou sadder sage,
To thee! we feel thy spell!
The hopeless tangle of our age,
Thou too hast scanned it well!

Immovable thou sittest, still
As death, composed to bear!
Thy head is clear, thy feeling chill,
And icy thy despair.

Yes, as the son of Thetis said,
One hears thee saying now:
Greater by far than thou are dead;
Strive not! die also thou!

Ah, two desires toss about
The poet's feverish blood.
One drives him to the world without,
And one to solitude.

The glow, he cries, the thrill of life,
Where, where do these abound?
Not in the world, not in the strife
Of men, shall they be found.

He who hath watch'd, not shared, the strife,
Knows how the day hath gone.

He only lives with the world's life
Who hath renounced his own.

To thee we come, then. Clouds are rolled
Where thou, O seer, art set;
Thy realm of thought is drear and cold—
The world is colder yet!

And thou hast pleasures, too, to share
With those who come to thee!
Balms floating on thy mountain-air,
And healing sights to see.

How often, where the slopes are green
On Jaman, hast thou sate
By some high chalet-door, and seen
The summer day grow late,

And darkness steal o'er the wet grass
With the pale crocus starred,
And reach that glimmering sheet of glass
Beneath the piny sward,

Lake Leman's waters, far below!
And watched the rosy light
Fade from the distant peaks of snow;
And on the air of night

Heard accents of the eternal tongue
Through the pine branches play!
Listened, and felt thyself grow young!
Listened, and wept——Away!

Away the dreams that but deceive!
And thou, sad guide, adieu!
I go; fate drives me! but I leave
Half of my life with you.

[illegible] ay,

[illegible] at will, enjoy,
Nor, when we will, resign.

I in the world must live! but thou,
Thou melancholy shade,
Wilt not, if thou can'st see me now,
Condemn me, nor upbraid!

For thou art gone away from earth,
And place with those dost claim,
The children of the second birth
Whom the world could not tame;

[illegible] band,

Christian and pagan, king and slave,
Soldier and anchorite,
Distinctions we esteem so grave,
Are nothing in their sight

They do not ask, who pined unseen,
Who was on action hurled,
Whose one bond is, that all have been
Unspotted by the world.

There without anger thou wilt see
Him who obeys thy spell
No more, so he but rest, like thee,
Unsoiled;—and so, farewell!

Farewell!—Whether thou now liest near
That much-loved inland sea

The ripples of whose blue waves cheer
Vevey and Meillerie;

And in that gracious region bland,
Where with clear-rustling wave
The scented pines of Switzerland
Stand dark round thy green grave,

Between the dusty vineyard-walls
Issuing on that green place
The early peasant still recalls
The pensive stranger's face,

And stoops to clear thy moss-grown date
Ere he plods on again;—
Or whether, by maligner fate,
Among the swarms of men,

Where between granite terraces
The blue Seine rolls her wave,
The capital of pleasure sees
Thy hardly-heard-of grave—

Farewell! Under the sky we part,
In this stern Alpine dell.
O unstrung will! O broken heart!
A last, a last farewell!

OBERMANN ONCE MORE

(COMPOSED MANY YEARS AFTER THE PRECEDING)

Savez-vous quelque bien qui console du regret d'un monde?—OBERMANN.

GLION?——Ah, twenty years, it cuts[24]
All meaning from a name!
White houses prank where once were huts;
Glion, but not the same!

And yet I know not! All unchanged
The turf, the pines, the sky;
The hills in their old order ranged;
The lake, with Chillon by!

And 'neath those chestnut-trees, where stiff
And stony mounts the way,
Their crackling husk-heaps burn, as if
I left them yesterday.

Across the valley, on that slope,
The huts of Avant shine!
Its pines under their branches ope
Ways for the tinkling kine.

.
Before he climb the pass—

The gentian-flowered pass, its crown [25]
With yellow spires aflame,
Whence drops the path to Allière down,
And walls where Byron came, [28]

By their green river who doth change
His birth-name just below—
Orchard, and croft, and full-stored grange
Nursed by his pastoral flow.

But stop!—to fetch back thoughts that stra

Ah, Jaman! delicately tall

What thoughts to me his rocks recall!
What memories he stirs!

And who but thou must be, in truth,
Obermann! with me here?
Thou master of my wandering youth,
But left this many a year!

Yes, I forget the world's work wrought,
Its warfare waged with pain!
An eremite with thee, in thought
Once more I slip my chain,

And to thy mountain-chalet come,
And lie beside its door;
And hear the wild bee's Alpine hum,
And thy sad, tranquil lore!

Again I feel its words inspire
Their mournful calm—serene,
Yet tinged with infinite desire
For all that *might* have been;

The harmony from which man swerved
Made his life's rule once more!
The universal order served!
Earth happier than before!

While thus I mused, night gently ran
Down over hill and wood.
Then, still and sudden, Obermann
On the grass near me stood.

Those pensive features well I knew,
On my mind, years before,
Imaged so oft, imaged so true!
A shepherd's garb he wore,

A mountain-flower was in his hand,
A book was in his breast ;
Bent on my face, with gaze which scanned
My soul, his eyes did rest.

" And is it thou," he cried, " so long
Held by the world which we
Loved not, who turnest from the throng
Back to thy youth and me ?

" And from thy world, with heart opprest,
Choosest thou *now* to turn ?—
Ah me, we anchorites knew it best !
Best can its course discern !

'nial earth,

h,

" Wellnigh two thousand years have brought
Their load, and gone away,
Since last on earth there lived and wrought
A world like ours to-day

" Like ours it looked in outward air !
But of that inward prize,
Soul, that we take more count and care,
Ah ! there our future lies.

—

pause its action knew ;

" Stout was its arm, each thew and bone
Seemed puissant and alive—

But, ah ! its heart, its heart was stone,
And so it could not thrive.

" On that hard Pagan world disgust
And secret loathing fell ;
Deep weariness and sated lust
Made human life a hell.

" In his cool hall, with haggard eyes,
The Roman noble lay ;
He drove abroad, in furious guise,
Along the Appian way ;

" He made a feast, drank fierce and fast,
And crowned his hair with flowers—
No easier nor no quicker passed
The impracticable hours.

" The brooding East with awe beheld
Her impious younger world.
The Roman tempest swelled and swelled,
And on her head was hurled.

" The East bowed low before the blast
In patient, deep disdain ;
She let the legions thunder past,
And plunged in thought again.

" So well she mused, a morning broke
Across her spirit grey.
A conquering, new-born joy awoke,
And filled her life with day.

" ' Poor world,' she cried, ' so deep accurst !
That runn'st from pole to pole
To seek a draught to slake thy thirst—
Go, seek it in thy soul ! '

"She heard it, the victorious West,
In crown and sword arrayed!
She felt the void which mined her breast,
She shivered and obeyed.

"She veiled her eagles, snapped her sword,
And laid her sceptre down;
Her stately purple she abhorred,
And her imperial crown;

"She broke her flutes, she stopped her sports,
Her artists could not please,
She tore her books, she shut her courts,
She fled her palaces.

"Lust of the eye and pride of life
She left it all behind—
And hurried, torn with inward strife,
The wilderness to find

"Tears washed the trouble from her face!
She changed into a child!
'Mid weeds and wrecks she stood—a place
Of ruin—but she smiled!

"Oh, had I lived in that great day,
How had its glory new
Filled earth and heaven, and caught away
My ravished spirit too!

"No cloister-floor of humid stone
Had been too cold for me,
For me no Eastern desert lone
Had been too far to flee.

"No thoughts that to the world belong
Had stood against the wave

Of love which set so deep and strong
From Christ's then open grave.

"No lonely life had passed too slow
When I could hourly see
That wan, nailed Form, with head drooped low,
Upon the bitter tree ;

"Could see the Mother with the Child
Whose tender winning arts
Have to his little arms beguiled
So many wounded hearts !

"And centuries came, and ran their course,
And unspent all that time
Still, still went forth that Child's dear force,
And still was at its prime.

"Ay, ages long endured his span
Of life, 'tis true received,
That gracious Child, that thorn-crowned Man !
He lived while we believed.

"While we believed, on earth he went,
And open stood his grave ;
Men called from chamber, church, and tent,
And Christ was by to save.

"Now he is dead ! Far hence he lies
In the lorn Syrian town,
And on his grave, with shining eyes,
The Syrian stars look down.

"In vain men still, with hoping new,
Regard his death-place dumb,
And say the stone is not yet to,
And wait for words to come.

"Ah, from that silent sacred land,
Of sun, and arid stone,
And crumbling wall, and sultry sand,
Comes now one word alone!

[illegible]
Nor pay his brother's debt.

"Alone, self-poised, henceforward man
Must labour! must resign
His all too human creeds, and scan
Simply the way divine.

"But slow that tide of common thought,
Which bathed our life, retired;
Slow, slow the old world wore to nought,
And pulse by pulse expired.

"Its frame yet stood without a breach
When blood and warmth were fled;
And still it spake its wonted speech—
But every word was dead.

"And oh, we cried, that on this corse
Might fall a freshening storm!
Rive its dry bones, and with new force
A new-sprung world inform!

"Down came the storm! O'er France it passed
In sheets of scathing fire.
All Europe felt that fiery blast,
And shook as it rushed by her.

"Down came the storm! In ruins fell
The outworn world we knew.

It passed, that elemental swell!
Again appeared the blue.

"The sun shone in the new-washed sky—
And what from heaven saw he?
Blocks of the past, like icebergs high,
Float on a rolling sea!

"Upon them ply the race of man
All they before endeavoured;
They come and go, they work and plan,
And know not they are severed!

"Poor fragments of a broken world
Whereon we pitch our tent!
Why were ye, too, to death not hurled
When your world's day was spent?

"That glow of central fire is done
Which with its fusing flame
Knit all your parts, and kept you one;—
But ye, ye are the same!

"The past, its mask of union on,
Had ceased to live and thrive;
The past, its mask of union gone,
Say, is it more alive?

"Your creeds are dead, your rites are dead,
Your social order too!
Where tarries he, the Power who said:
See, I make all things new?

"The millions suffer still, and grieve—
And what can helpers heal
With old-world cures men half believe
For woes they wholly feel?

"And yet they have such need of joy!
And joy whose grounds are true,
And joy that should all hearts employ
As when the past was new!

"Ah, not the emotion of that past,
Its common hope, were vain!
A new such hope must dawn at last,
Or man must toss in pain.

"But now the past is out of date,
The future not yet born—
And who can be *alone* elate,
While the world lies forlorn?

"Then to the wilderness I fled,
There among Alpine snows
And pastoral huts I hid my head,
And sought and found repose.

"It was not yet the appointed hour.
Sad, patient, and resigned,
I watched the crocus fade and flower,
I felt the sun and wind.

"The day I lived in was not mine;
Man gets no second day.
In dreams I saw the future shine,
But, ah, I could not stay!

"Action I had not, followers, fame;
I passed obscure, alone.
The after-world forgets my name,
Nor do I wish it known.

"[illegible] within, I lived and died,
And knew my life was vain,

With fate I murmur not, nor chide !
At Sèvres by the Seine

" (If Paris that brief flight allow)
My humble tomb explore ;
It bears : *Eternity, be thou*
My refuge ! and no more.

" But thou, whom fellowship of mood
Did make from haunts of strife
Come to my mountain-solitude
And learn my frustrate life ;

" O thou, who, ere thy flying span
Was past of cheerful youth,
Didst seek the solitary man
And love his cheerless truth—

" Despair not thou as I despaired,
Nor be cold gloom thy prison !
Forward the gracious hours have fared,
And see ! the sun is risen.

" He melts the icebergs of the past,
A green, new earth appears !
Millions, whose life in ice lay fast,
Have thoughts, and smiles, and tears.

" The world's great order dawns in shee
After long darkness rude,
Divinelier imaged, clearer seen,
With happier zeal pursued.

" With hope extinct and brow compose
I marked the present die ;
Its term of life was nearly closed,
... more than I.

In the yet star-sown nightly sky,
The peak of Jaman stood.

Still in my soul the voice I heard
Of Obermann !——away
I turned ; by some vague impulse stirred,
Along the rocks of Naye

And Sonchaud's piny flanks I gaze,
And the blanched summit bare
Of Malatrait, to where in haze
The Valais opens fair,

And the domed Velan, with his snows,
Behind the upcrowding hills,
Doth all the heavenly opening close
Which the Rhone's murmur fills ;

And glorious there, without a sound,
Across the glimmering lake,
High in the Valais-depth profound,
I saw the morning break.

THE FUTURE

A WANDERER is man from his birth.
He was born in a ship
On the breast of the river of Time ;
Brimming with wonder and joy
He spreads out his arms to the light,
Rivets his gaze on the banks of the stream.

As what he sees is, so have his thoughts been.
Whether he wakes
Where the snowy mountainous pass,
Echoing the screams of the eagles,

Whether in sound of the swallowing sea—
As is the world on the banks,
So is the mind of the man.

Vainly does each as he glides
Fable and dream
Of the lands which the river of Time
Had left ere he woke on its breast,
Or shall reach when his eyes have been closed.
Only the tract where he sails
He wots of; only the thoughts,
Raised by the objects he passes, are his.

Who can see the green earth any more
As she was by the sources of Time?
Who imagines her fields as they lay
In the sunshine, unworn by the plough?
Who thinks as they thought,
The tribes who then roamed on her breast,
Her vigorous primitive sons?

What girl
Now reads in her bosom as clear
As Rebekah read, when she sate
At eve by the palm-shaded well?
Who guards in her breast
As deep, as pellucid a spring
Of feeling, as tranquil, as sure?

What bard,
At the height of his vision, can deem
Of God, of the world, of the soul,
With a plainness as near,

As flashing as Moses felt,
When he lay in the night by his flock
On the starlit Arabian waste?
Can rise and obey
The beck of the Spirit like him?

This tract which the river of Time
Now flows through with us, is the plain.
Gone is the calm of its earlier shore.
Bordered by cities, and hoarse
With a thousand cries is its stream.
And we on its breast, our minds
Are confused as the cries which we hear,
Changing and shot as the sights which we see.

And we say that repose has fled
For ever the course of the river of Time.
That cities will crowd to its edge
In a blacker incessanter line;
That the din will be more on its banks,
Denser the trade on its stream,
Flatter the plain where it flows,
Fiercer the sun overhead.
That never will those on its breast
See an ennobling sight,
Drink of the feeling of quiet again.

But what was before us we know not,
And we know not what shall succeed.

Haply, the river of Time,
As it grows, as the towns on its marge
Fling their wavering lights
On a wider, statelier stream—
May acquire, if not the calm
Of its early mountainous shore,
Yet a solemn peace of its own.

agreeably to the last request of Sohrab, permitted to cross the Oxus unmolested. To reconcile us to the improbability of this tale, we are informed that Rustum could have no idea his son was in existence. The mother of Sohrab had written to him her child was a daughter, fearing to lose her darling infant if she revealed the truth; and Rustum, as before stated, fought under a feigned name, an usage not uncommon in the chivalrous combats of those days."

NOTE 2, PAGE 34

Mycerinus

"After Chephren, Mycerinus, son of Cheops, reigned over Egypt. He abhorred his father's courses, and judged his subjects more justly than any of their kings had done.—To him there came an oracle from the city of Buto, to the effect, that he was to live but six years longer, and to die in the seventh year from that time."—*Herodotus*.

NOTE 3, PAGE 38

Balder Dead

"Balder the Good having been tormented with terrible dreams, indicating that his life was in great peril, communicated them to the assembled Æsir, who resolved to conjure all things to avert from him the threatened danger. Then Frigga exacted an oath from fire and water, from iron, and all other metals, as well as from stones, earths, diseases, beasts, birds, poisons, and creeping things, that none of them would do any harm to Balder. When this was done, it became a favourite pastime of the Æsir, at their meetings, to get Balder to stand up and serve them as a mark, some hurling darts at him, some stones, while others hewed at him with their swords and battle-axes, for do they what they would, none of them could harm him, and this was regarded by all as a great honour shown to Balder. But when Loki beheld the scene he was sorely vexed that Balder was not hurt. Assuming, therefore, the shape of a woman, he went to Fensalir, the mansion of Frigga. That goddess, when she saw the pretended woman, inquired of her if she knew what the Æsir were doing at their meetings. She replied, that they were throwing darts and stones at Balder without being able to hurt him.

NOTES

NOTE 1, PAGE 3

Sohrab and Rustum

"The story of Sohrab and Rustum is told in Sir John Malcolm's *History of Persia*, as follows:—'The young Sohrab was the fruit of one of Rustum's early amours. He had left his mother, and sought fame under the banners of Afrasiab, whose armies he commanded, and soon obtained a renown beyond that of all contemporary heroes but his father. He had carried death and dismay into the ranks of the Persians, and had terrified the boldest warriors of that country, before Rustum encountered him, which at last that hero resolved to do, under a feigned name. They met three times. The first time they parted by mutual consent, though Sohrab had the advantage; the second, the youth obtained a victory, but granted life to his unknown father; the third was fatal to Sohrab, who, when writhing in the pangs of death, warned his conqueror to shun the vengeance that is inspired by parental woes, and bade him dread the rage of the mighty Rustum, who must soon learn that he had slain his son Sohrab. These words, we are told, were as death to the aged hero; and when he recovered from a trance, he called in despair for proofs of what Sohrab had said. The afflicted and dying youth tore open his mail, and showed his father a seal which his mother had placed on his arm when she discovered to him the secret of his birth, and bade him seek his father. The sight of his own signet rendered Rustum quite frantic; he cursed himself, attempting to put an end to his existence, and was only prevented by the efforts of his expiring son. After Sohrab's death, he burnt his tents and all his goods, and carried the corpse to Seistan, where it was interred; the army of Turan was,

Hands.—He married her—more out of gratitude than love.—Afterwards he proceeded to the dominions of Arthur, which became the theatre of unnumbered exploits.

"Tristram, subsequent to these events, returned to Brittany, and to his long-neglected wife. There, being wounded and sick, he was soon reduced to the lowest ebb. In this situation, he dispatched a confidant to the queen of Cornwall, to try if he could induce her to accompany him to Brittany, etc."—*Dunlop's History of Fiction.*

NOTE 5, PAGE 128

He tarries where the Rock of Spain

The author's brother, William Delafield Arnold, Director of Public Instruction in the Punjab, and author of *Oakfield, or Fellowship in the East*, died at Gibraltar, on his way home from India, April 9, 1859.

NOTE 6, PAGE 132

So moonlit, saw me once of yore

See the preceding poem, "A Summer Night."

NOTE 7, PAGE 132

My brother! and thine early lot

See Note 5.

NOTE 8, PAGE 148

The Scholar-Gipsy

"There was very lately a lad in the University of Oxford, who was by his poverty forced to leave his studies there; and at last to join himself to a company of vagabond gipsies. Among these extravagant people, by the insinuating subtilty of his carriage, he quickly got so much of their love and esteem as that they discovered to him their mystery. After he had been a pretty while exercised in the trade, there chanced to ride by a couple of scholars, who had formerly been of his acquaintance. They quickly spied out their old friend among the gipsies; and he gave them an account of the necessity which drove him to that kind of life, and told them that the people he went with were not such impostors as they were taken for, but that they

had a traditional kind of learning among them, and could do wonders by the power of imagination, their fancy binding that of others: that himself had learned much of their art, and when he had compassed the whole secret, he intended, he said, to leave their company, and give the world an account of what he had learned."—*Glanvil's Vanity of Dogmatizing*, 1661.

NOTE 9, PAGE 156

Thyrsis

Throughout this poem there is reference to the preceding piece, "The Scholar-Gipsy."

NOTE 10, PAGE 161

Young Daphnis with his silver voice doth sing

Daphnis, the ideal Sicilian shepherd of Greek pastoral poetry, was said to have followed into Phrygia his mistress Piplea, who had been carried off by robbers, and to have found her in the power of the king of Phrygia, Lityerses.

[illegible]

no one else. He fell in love with a princess, and was struck blind by the jealous nymph. Mercury, who was his father, raised him to Heaven, and made a fountain spring up in the place from which he ascended. At this fountain the Sicilians offered yearly sacrifices.—See Servius, *Comment. in Virgil. Bucol.*, v. 20, and viii. 68.

NOTE 11, PAGE 170

Of the sun-loving gentian, in the he

The *Gentiana lutea.*

NOTE 12, PAGE 194

Ye Sun-born Virgins! on the road of truth.

See the Fragments of Parmenides:

> . . . . κοῦραι δ' ὁδὸν ἡγεμόνευον,
> ἡλίαδες κοῦραι, προλιποῦσαι δώματα νυκτός,
> εἰς φάος . . . .

NOTE 13, PAGE 203

The Hunter of the Tanagræan Field

Orion, the Wild Huntsman of Greek legend, and in this capacity appearing in both earth and sky.

NOTE 14, PAGE 204

O'er the sun-reddened western straits

Erytheia, the legendary region around the Pillars of Hercules, probably took its name from the redness of the est under which the Greeks saw it.

NOTE 15, PAGE 232

Saw The Wide Prospect, and the Asian Fen

The name Europe (Εὐρώπη, *the wide prospect*) probably describes the appearance of the European coast to the Greeks on the coast of Asia Minor opposite. The name Asia, again, comes, it has been thought, from the fens of the marshy rivers of Asia Minor, such as the Cayster or Mæander, which struck the imagination of the Greeks living near them.

NOTE 16, PAGE 236

That son of Italy who tried to blow

Giacopone di Todi.

NOTE 17, PAGE 238

Of that unpitying Phrygian sect which cried

The Montanists.

NOTE 18, PAGE 239

Recalls the obscure opposer he outweighed

Gilbert de la Porrée, at the Council of Rheims, in 1148.

NOTE 19, PAGE 240

See St. Augustine's *Confessions*, book ix., chapter 11.

NOTE 20, PAGE 242

That wayside inn we left to-day

Those who have been long familiar with the English Lake Country will have no difficulty in recalling, from the description in the text, the roadside inn at Wythburn on the descent from Dunmail Raise towards Keswick; its sedentary landlord of twenty years ago, and the passage over the Wythburn Fells to Watendlath.

NOTE 21, PAGE 286

Goethe, too, had been there

See *Harzreise im Winter*, in Goethe's *Gedichte*.

NOTE 22, PAGE 296

The author of *Obermann*, Étienne Pivert de Senancour, has little celebrity in France, his own country; and out of [illegible] and charmed some of the most remarkable spirits of this century, such as George Sand and Sainte-Beuve, and will probably always find a certain number of spirits whom they will touch and interest.

Senancour was born in 1770. He was educated for the priesthood, and passed some time in the Seminary of St. Sulpice; broke away from the Seminary and from France itself, and passed some years in Switzerland, where he married; returned to France in middle life, and followed thenceforward the career of a man of letters—but wit hardly any fame or success. He died an old

desiring that on his grave might be placed these words only: *Éternité, deviens mon asile!*

The influence of Rousseau, and certain affinities with more famous and fortunate authors of his own day,—Chateaubriand and Madame de Staël,—are everywhere visible in Senancour. But though, like these eminent personages, he may be called a sentimental writer, and though *Obermann*, a collection of letters from Switzerland treating almost entirely of nature and of the human soul, may be called a work of sentiment, Senancour has a gravity and severity which distinguish him from all other writers of the sentimental school. The world is with him in his solitude far less than it is with them; of all writers he is the most perfectly isolated and the least attitudinizing. His chief work, too, has a value and power of its own, apart from these merits of its author. The stir of all the main forces by which modern life is and has been impelled lives in the letters of *Obermann*; the dissolving agencies of the eighteenth century, the fiery storm of the French Revolution, the first faint promise and dawn of that new world which our own time is but now fully bringing to light,—all these are to be felt, almost to be touched, there. To me, indeed, it will always seem that the impressiveness of this production can hardly be rated too high.

Besides *Obermann*, there is one other of Senancour's works which, for those spirits who feel his attraction, is very interesting; its title is, *Libres Méditations d'un Solitaire Inconnu.*

NOTE 23, PAGE 296

Behind are the abandoned baths

The Baths of Leuk. This poem was conceived, and partly composed, in the valley going down from the foot of the Gemmi Pass towards the Rhone.

NOTE 24, PAGE 302

Glion?—Ah, twenty years, it cuts

Probably all who know the Vevey end of the Lake of Geneva will recollect Glion, the mountain-village above the castle of Chillon. Glion now has hotels, *pensions*, and villas; but twenty years ago it was hardly more than the

huts of Avant opposite to it,—huts through which goes that beautiful path over the Col de Jaman, followed by so many foot-travellers on their way from Vevey to the Simmenthal and Thun.

NOTE 25, PAGE 303

The gentian-flowered pass, its crown

See Note 11.

NOTE 26, PAGE 303

And walls where Byron came

Montbovon. See Byron's Journal, in his *Works*, vol. iii. p 258. The river Saane becomes the Sarine below Montbovon.

THE END

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN AT
THE PRESS OF THE PUBLISHERS